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Israel

The IDF told the Lebanese Army to "evacuate its positions in the vicinity of several Shiite villages in southern Lebanon" by 0300 GMT on 19 February, according to Jerusalem television, which also cited the coordinator of Israeli policy in Lebanon as saying that he has not heard any "earthshaking reactions" from Syria following the death of Hizballah leader al-Musawi. All aircraft returned after striking a "Hizballah target" in south Lebanon, Jerusalem radio reported, while Foreign Minister Levi criticized his Lebanese counterpart's words of support for the group. Ari'el Sharon urged the inner cabinet to debate whether to expand the security zone, and said continued Damascus participation in the peace talks should be made contingent on Syria's removing "terrorist" bases from the area, Tel Aviv radio added. The deputy defense minister said the government holds Iran "solely responsible" for the fate of captured airman Ron Arad, Jerusalem radio disclosed. Elsewhere, Shamir rejected a U.S. "demand" for Jerusalem to submit a plan for Palestinian self-government at once, the radio announced. Shamir told the radio that the arrest of two "Palestinian activists" is "part of reality," and that "as far as I know, these men in question are not delegation members, but people who were assigned some administrative duties." The government was notified officially that four Israelis detained in Cairo are suspected of "harming state security and falsifying documents," according to HA'ARETZ, which noted that the message from Cairo mentions neither Israel nor the Mosad.

Lebanon

Part of a speech by Hasan Nasrallah, successor to 'Abbas al-Musawi as head of Hizballah, was broadcast by Hizballah radio, the clandestine Voice of the Oppressed. Nasrallah, who was speaking at al-Musawi's funeral, said, "The United States will remain the principal enemy of the nation, and the great Satan," adding that "we hold first the United States and second Israel responsible for this massacre." The radio also reported on funeral speeches by other Hizballah leaders, Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah among them. "A Shiite organization in Lebanon" announced that it has executed Israeli pilot Ron Arad, Cairo radio reported, citing a spokesman's remarks that the act was in retaliation for the killing of al-Musawi. A "mass exodus" from villages in the south took place after Israeli-backed forces issued an "ultimatum" ordering an evacuation, Beirut radio reported.

Libya

Authorities barred journalists from covering the trial of the Lockerbie defendants, according to a London-based Arabic television station; media representatives saw the accused, however, which showed that "the two defendants had not disappeared or been executed."

Algeria

The prime minister promised to hold elections within two years, adding that the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) "has the right to prepare itself for them on the condition that it respects the law," Algiers radio reported, citing an interview in the London paper AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT. The Higher State Council expressed "satisfaction" with public services and security, the radio continued. The radio speculated that a government reshuffle promised for 19 February would probably not take place. Ahmed Merani, an FIS leader, said he is willing to participate in the Higher State Council's National Consultative Council, providing "that he is listened to and not just put on display," Paris international radio reported. A member of the Higher State Council said about 5,000 people have been arrested since the beginning of February, Algiers radio noted.

Iran

Secretary Baker's comments on Algeria are "a declaration of war" against Islam, according to a JOMHURI-YE-ESLAMI editorial. A commentary carried on Tehran's international English service termed Salman Rushdie "Islam's number one enemy," while a spokesman for the Iranian Embassy in London said the religious decree calling for Rushdie's death is "absolutely irreversible," the agency added. The spokesman also termed reports about a meeting between "a local employee of the embassy" and a member of a pro-Rushdie group as a "mere propaganda stunt," the agency continued, adding that the spokesman "categorically denied" reports about a meeting between the activists and Iranian diplomats.

Egypt

An attempt to assassinate the Israeli ambassador failed, the Beirut paper AL-SHIRA' reported. Circumstances of the incident indicated a penetration of the Egyptian security service, the paper continued.

Syria

A top foreign affairs official said the country "has not thus far attempted to recruit nuclear scientists from the Commonwealth states," the Abu Dhabi paper AL-ITTIHAD reported.

Pakistan

The government may sue the United States for nondelivery of six F-16 aircraft, according to THE MUSLIM; defense experts told the paper that nondelivery would be a "another setback" for the country.

Palestinian Affairs

Al-Husayni—Participation in U.S. Talks Suspended

LD1802191292 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] The Palestinian side has decided to suspend participation in the bilateral negotiations scheduled to be held in Washington on 24 February until they receive a positive reply on the release of two members of the consultative delegation, Muhammad al-Hurani and Jamal al-Shawbaki.

In a news conference held at the National Palace Hotel this morning, Faysal al-Husayni announced the delegation's decision to suspend the trip to Washington to protest the latest Israeli practices, the latest of which were the administrative detention for six months of Jamal al-Shawbaki, 32, on 16 February 1992, and Muhammad al-Hurani on 16 January 1992.

Al-Husayni also reviewed the Israeli practices in the occupied territories in terms of intensifying settlement, increasing arrests, and killings inside prisons. He pointed out that such measures jeopardized the peace process and could destroy it right from its base.

Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi also spoke at the news conference. She called on the international community to implement international legitimacy on the Palestinian issue, and said: We have decided to suspend our travel to Washington following the increase in Israeli provocations, the continuation of the settlement policy in the occupied territories, and the arrests of two members of the Palestinian delegation.

Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, the PLO delegation's spokeswoman, announced that the delegation added to its list the names of six new Palestinians from the occupied territories: Hasan Ibrahim Abu-Liddah, 37, from Jinin; Nadhmi al-Ju'bah, 38, from East Jerusalem; Su'ad al-'Amiri from Ramallah; Jabir Faddah, 50, from the Rafah camp; 'Abd al-Hadi Abu-Khawsah from the city of Gaza; and Dr. Anwar Dudin, from Hebron.

'Ashrawi reported that the delegation had asked that Muhammad al-Hurani and Jamal al-Shawbaki, who are from Hebron, be added to the list, but the Israeli authorities arrested them.

Travel to Amman Postponed

JN1802190092 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Faysal al-Husayni, head of the advisory council affiliated with the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks and who arrived in Amman today, told our Amman correspondent Randah Habib that the Palestinian delegation suspended its travel to Amman and not to Washington.

[Begin al-Husayni recording] In fact, the Palestinian declaration considered suspending the delegation's travel to Amman tomorrow pending further contacts to ascertain the situation and make a decision on whether or not we will go to Washington. The decision to go to Washington is one that is made by the Palestinian leadership and not (?through) the delegation in (?Jerusalem). [end recording]

Israeli 'Escalations' Criticized

JN1802192192 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Faysal al-Husayni, who arrived in Amman today, said that the arrival of the Palestinian delegation in Amman, which was scheduled for tomorrow, has been delayed until further notice.

In an exclusive interview with our political correspondent Salim 'Ali Dhiyab, al-Husayni said: The Israeli practices and the recent Israeli escalation could torpedo the entire peace process if the Israelis continue this escalation.

[Begin recording] [Al-Husayni] In fact, all plans were set to go to Washington for the 24 February talks. For this reason, the Palestinian delegation planned to leave Jerusalem for Amman tomorrow. However, the Israeli measures and escalation, which were also accompanied by the detention of a delegation member in the past two days and the earlier detention of another delegation member, prompted us to reconsider our departure tomorrow until contacts are made which will define the steps we should take toward Israel's behavior, and the reactions of the cosponsors of the conference to stop these Israeli practices and escalations.

[Dhiyab] Mr. Faysal, what contacts have you made along either the U.S. line or with the Arab parties?

[Al-Husayni] With regard to contacts with the Arab parties, upon my arrival in Amman today direct contact was made with the Jordanian foreign minister and with Palestinian officials. Meanwhile, during our time in Jerusalem, direct contact was made with the consuls of the foreign countries, including the U.S. consul and the U.S. State Department.

[Dhiyab] What was the outcome of these contacts?

[Al-Husayni] So far we have not achieved any practical results. The Americans informed us of their rejection of these Israeli measures, and of their efforts to stop them. So far, however, we have seen no response from the Israeli side. [end recording]

Fourth Round of Talks 'Decisive'

TA1802145792 Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic 17 Feb 92 p 1

[Text] In an exclusive interview with AL-MANAR, Faysal al-Husayni, head of the Palestinian negotiating team, has emphasized that the fourth round of negotiations will be decisive and that if the settlements issue is not discussed the peace process will be endangered. He

added that settlement activity not only threatens the multilaterals but also the bilaterals. He said, however, that the Palestinian side will never be the cause of halting the peace process.

Al-Husayni said that coordination among elements of the Arab negotiating side is good, and he emphasized that the presence of the Palestinian delegation in Moscow enhanced this coordination.

Al-Husayni is to leave for Amman with the negotiating delegation, but he will not accompany the delegation to Washington because of engagements outside the occupied territories. He is to visit several countries and meet with Jordanian officials to discuss enhancing coordination in the negotiations process.

'Ashrawi Discusses Strategy for Peace Talks

TA1802210092 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in English 17 Feb 92 p 16

[Interview with Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation to the Middle East peace talks, by Khalid Abu-'Akir; date and place not given]

[Text] Q: Have the Palestinians accepted Feb. 24 as the resumption date for peace negotiations, as outlined in the U.S. invitation?

A: During the Geneva meeting of the Human Rights Committee of the United Nations, President 'Arafat announced that the Palestinians would go to Washington on the 24th, along with the Jordanian side, the Syrians and the Lebanese. It is obvious that any Palestinian position will be coordinated with all the other Arab parties involved.

Q: Do you expect that negotiations will center on substance?

A: This is very crucial and decisive meeting in Washington. There is a Palestinian agenda, which is very clear. The issues will, of course, always be headed by the settlements activities issue. We will raise the human rights issue—not as a negotiating position—but we will raise it in terms of negotiating with Israel and in terms of public opinion on Israel's practices in the occupied territories.

We hope that we will have concrete changes on the ground in order to start negotiations on substance.

Q: Do you expect any achievements on the issue of settlements?

A: There has to be a decisive, concrete move on settlements; otherwise, there can't be any progress in the negotiations.

Q: Some Palestinians expect that there will be no results from the coming meeting, and they call for a suspension of negotiations until after Israeli elections. What is the delegation's response?

A: Maybe sessions after this one (will be suspended), but this session is crucial, because it comes at a very particular time. Number one, you have the multilaterals, in terms of the working groups meeting at the end of April or early May. Palestinian, Syrian and Lebanese participation is subject to concrete, substantive progress in the bilaterals. So if we delay the bilaterals, it means we are preventing progress.

This is the basis of Palestinian participation, in addition to Palestinian representation, in the multilaterals. If there is a chance to achieve any progress, it will have to be achieved during this session of the bilaterals.

Number two, we know that the sponsors and the participating countries in the multilaterals are keen on having complete Arab participation, so they will push towards achievements in the bilaterals.

Number three, the issue of the loan guarantees and settlements is an issue on the agenda now, and we need a negotiating session in order to press for the cessation of settlement activities and for human rights.

Ultimately, there is a Palestinian agenda and position, and the fact that the sponsors and (U.S. Secretary of State James) Baker have sent a letter asking for it (the negotiating session) is an actual accomplishment. And the fact that he (Baker) wanted to be in Washington during the negotiations is an indication that the sponsors are willing to take a more active role.

Put all these things together, and one understands why it's important that we participate. We'll evaluate the results of this session, and on that basis, a decision will be taken on future participation in the multilaterals and bilaterals.

Q: Do you think Israel will be able, during the ongoing election season, to freeze settlements?

A: Israel should be able to declare a cessation of settlement activity. Even though there are elections, there is a government right now and this government is the government responsible for all the negative actions of building more settlements and annexing more land. So this government that is doing negative actions should be able to take the decision to stop these illegal actions.

Q: That would affect the Likud's position in the elections.

A: That's true, but at the same time we're not discussing internal Israeli political issues. There have to be issues that are greater than party concerns in Israel. The settlements issue concerns the mentality of the Israeli official position. Regardless of the party, it is an illegal act and should be stopped.

If the Likud will not stop it because of political concerns, then (a settlements freeze) has to be made clear, and the only way to make it clear—and the only way to hold the Israeli government accountable—is by challenging it, not by delaying the challenge.

Q: Recently, U.S. officials have expressed their desire that Israel freeze settlement activity in East Jerusalem and the rest of the occupied territories. What impact does that have on the Palestinian position and on the talks?

A: This is an advanced position. It's viewed very positively by the Palestinians. The cessation of all settlement activity and confiscation of land in the occupied territories, also in East Jerusalem, is, in a sense, a precedent in American history and American-Israeli relations.

We are encouraged by that position, but at the same time, we need to make sure that the United States or any participant or sponsor is not seen as sanctioning or legitimizing settlement activity by allowing them to continue.

Q: Do you see an American double standard when it tells Israel to stop building settlements, but does not force it to stop, and does not think of pressuring Israel?

A: The loan guarantees issue is one form of pressure, and it is an active, or very effective, form of pressure. It seems to me this has to be extended.

The Americans said they are willing to exert their influence on issues of substance in the negotiating process, although Israel has tried to prevent any type of progress or achievement.

Still, it is possible that the progress of a clear and firm American position and active steps, along with a clear and firm European position, would be able to achieve concrete results.

Q: There is a campaign to distort the Palestinian position, for example: the way President 'Arafat was treated in Geneva, in addition to media reports of racist remarks made by 'Arafat. Are they attempts to weaken the Palestinian image after what it achieved in the past months?

A: I think there is a campaign of distortion and disinformation again. The Palestinians have made serious gains in public opinion and have succeeded in breaking through the barriers that Israel has placed around the Palestinian image.

We see now, several incidents—I wouldn't call them coincidental, I call them suspiciously coincidental—which indicate that there is an attempt to distort the Palestinian position again and go back to all sorts of racist accusations and positions.

I feel that Israel and its supporters have become extremely active and we have to be aware that we are facing a very difficult time ahead, especially in view of the fact that the reasonable, responsible Palestinian position in terms of making our case clear, has become evident in public opinion. We have made serious gains, and now they're trying to reverse this.

Of course, it comes as part of an overall picture to exert pressure on the Palestinians. To me, the most sinister pressure on the Palestinians, and the most cruel and deliberate, is Israel's manipulation of its position as occupier in order to victimize a defenseless population, and to create feelings of resentment and hostility, as well as to create facts on the ground that are prejudicial to the process.

'Abd-Rabbuh Views Participation in Peace Process

JN1802195592 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1915 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] In a statement to SANA this evening, PLO Executive Committee member Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh announced that the Palestinian delegation will participate in the upcoming round of the Middle East peace talks in Washington, which will open on 24 February. He said that there is full understanding and coordination among the Palestinians, Syria, and the Arab delegations concerned with peace in the region.

'Abd-Rabbuh said that the Palestinians have expressed their protest over Israel's terrorist measures against two members of the administrative team of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks. The Palestinian official said that this issue, together with the questions of settlements and Israel's oppressive practices, will head the topics that the Palestinian delegation and the fraternal Arab delegations will raise during the upcoming round of talks.

'Abd-Rabbuh added: There is no doubt that the criminal aggressions against southern Lebanon will also be discussed, whether during the talks or at the UN Security Council.

Fatah's al-Hasan Denies Differences Over Talks

NC1702145392 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0704 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Text] Rabat, 17 Feb (MENA)—Fatah Central Committee member Hani al-Hasan has denied there are differences among PLO leaders.

In an exclusive statement to MENA's Rabat correspondent, al-Hasan said: It is true that the issue of the Moscow negotiations caused some controversy, but this did not reach the point of disagreement. He added that PLO Executive Committee member Mahmud 'Abbas, "Abu-Mazin," whom he described as the architect of the Palestinian peace process, is currently in Tunisia, where he is carrying out his duties.

Al-Hasan continued: Such rumors about inter-Palestinian differences do not surprise us.

Fatah Central Committee member Hani al-Hasan is visiting Morocco, where he has met with the leaders of several Moroccan political parties including the Socialist Union of Popular Forces, the Party of Progress and Socialism, and the Organization for Democratic and

Popular Action. He discussed with them the general Arab situation, the Palestinian issue, and other Middle East issues.

Hani al-Hasan also met with Hocine Ait Ahmed, leader of the Algerian Socialist Forces Front, who also is visiting Morocco. He discussed with him prospects for bilateral cooperation at the grass-roots level, the general Arab situation, and the situation in Algeria.

Hani al-Hasan and Hocine Ait Ahmad had arrived in Rabat to attend the 40-day death anniversary of major Moroccan politician Abderrahim Bouabid, first secretary of the Socialist Union of Popular Forces.

Egypt Assists Talks; U.S. Self-Rule Proposals

TA1802172392 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 18 Feb 92 pp 1, 10

[Text] Cairo—AL-QUDS has learned that Egypt is currently making intensive contacts with the Arab parties to moderate all the positions that might impede the peace process in a bid to arrive at the best possible solutions before the start of the upcoming round of Arab-Israeli talks on 24 February.

Informed sources have said that these contacts with Amman, Damascus, Beirut, and the Palestinians seek, on the whole, to shape a positive Arab position on participation in the talks and to respond favorably to the U.S. invitation to come to Washington.

The sources affirmed that Egypt will make a decision this week on the proposal by the Palestinians to introduce modifications in the Palestinian delegation to the Washington talks in light of the Palestinian proposals that Egypt received during the visit of senior PLO figure 'Abdallah al-Hurani following direct contacts with the United States.

The sources explained that Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa's recent visits to several European capitals aimed at clarifying the Arab positions, affirming the Arab commitment to the essence of the peace process, and at the same time rejecting the intensive campaign of Israeli maneuvers.

In another development, the PLO is consulting with Arab parties on the recent U.S. proposals to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. The sources affirm that the Arab response will contain many reservations, especially on the issues of East Jerusalem and the self-government period, which represents the interim period after which full authority is to be transferred to the Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Informed sources explained that these U.S. proposals are being studied by the Arab frontline states in addition to the Arab countries participating in the peace process because they include points relating to regional problems, which are discussed within the framework of the multilateral talks in which 36 countries are participating.

The sources explained that the long-term U.S. plan includes granting West Bank and Gaza Strip Palestinians self-government for a period of 10 years instead of three, which was the first issue to be discussed at the Madrid peace conference. During this period the Palestinians and the Israelis will study all the details for signing a final agreement on the status of these territories. The U.S. plan also calls for restoring the Golan Heights to Syria, provided that it remains a demilitarized area for a long time. Moreover, the plan calls for dividing Jerusalem into three parts among Jews, Muslims, and Christians, with the formation of a responsible committee of guardians from all three communities which will undertake the supervision of all spheres.

The U.S. proposals also call for the equal distribution of all water resources located between Turkey and the Red Sea. This represents a solution to the problem of acute water shortages and to eliminating the main cause of the continuing wars in the Middle East.

The sources said that these proposals will be discussed with the delegations during consultations which U.S. Secretary of State James Baker will hold in Washington before the start of the new round of bilateral talks the middle of next week.

The U.S.-Palestinian Dialogue

Expectations in political circles have increased due to the possibility of a resumption of the direct U.S.-Palestinian dialogue following the conclusion of the new round of bilateral talks in Washington.

Informed sources have indicated that Egypt is making intensive efforts for the resumption of this dialogue, which it has termed immensely significant, especially because this will help resolve numerous differences before the start of the work of the committees formed through the multilateral talks. These committees are expected to convene in April and May.

Palestinian circles in Cairo have welcomed the possibility of the resumption of this dialogue while pointing out that the Palestinian side continues to adhere to the U.S. letter of guarantees, sent with the invitation to the peace conference, which calls for the participation of Palestinian representatives from outside the occupied territories and Jerusalem in the multilaterals committees. This will be considered an important step in favor of U.S. credibility and will make it easier for the Palestinians to obtain interim self-government during a transitional phase, followed by self-determination.

In another development, it has been learned from Western sources in Cairo that the bilateral or multilateral Arab-Israeli peace talks will not stop during the Israeli election process, particularly because the Israeli teams conducting those talks are not composed of government officials who might be affected by the election campaign.

These sources expect the new date and venue of the talks to be determined at the end of the upcoming round of bilateral negotiations in Washington because of Israel's insistence on transferring the next round of negotiations to one of the European capitals if its initial proposal to move the negotiations to a Middle Eastern capital is rejected.

There is almost no possibility that the multilateral talks, which are expected to begin in April and May in the capitals determined beforehand in the talks held last month in Moscow, will be delayed.

Western circles in Cairo have expressed the hope that the results of the bilateral talks in Washington will represent a new turning point toward the participation of all the parties in the multilateral talks. They pointed out that this will encourage the Palestinians, Syria, and Lebanon to take part in the talks.

PLO Statement Mourns Death of al-Musawi

JN1802174192 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Statement issued by the PLO on 16 February; place not given—read by announcer]

[Text] The PLO mourns, along with the Palestinian Arab people and the masses of the Arab nation, martyr Shaykh 'Abbas al-Musawi, secretary general of the Hizballah organization in Lebanon, who fell Sunday in the terrorist Israeli raid against al-Zahrani and other southern Lebanese areas and against defenseless Lebanese citizens.

While mourning the death of the heroic martyr Shaykh 'Abbas al-Musawi, who was well known in Lebanon as a firm struggler against the Israeli occupation, the PLO recalls the great sacrifices of the martyr, who believed that all strugglers, no matter what their positions, have a common militant goal—namely, liberating the land from the Israeli usurper.

The PLO pledges to the heroic martyr and his predecessor martyrs that it will continue to go forward until liberation and victory are achieved. It emphasizes that this terrorist, criminal, horrible Israeli act has reached the highest level, as Zionist military belligerence is further threatening security and stability in the region and the world.

May God bestow His mercy on the heroic martyr Shaykh 'Abbas al-Musawi and provide him the abode of His wide paradise.

PLO Command in Lebanon Decries Killing

NC1702143392 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1230 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Text] The PLO's command in Lebanon has issued a statement denouncing the assassination of the resistance martyr 'Abbas al-Musawi; his wife, child, and companions; as well as the murder of civilians in the 'Ayn al-Hulwah and al-Rashidiyah camps. It called on humanitarian and international organizations, as well as the forces of liberation and progress in the world, to hold Israel responsible and to impose appropriate punishment for its defiance of human rights and its disregard for the decisions of international legitimacy.

PLO Official Comments on Habash Affair

PM1402152892 Paris LIBERATION in French 13 Feb 92 pp 31, 32

[Interview with PLO representative in Paris Ibrahim al-Sus by Christophe Boltanski in Paris; date not given; first paragraph is editorial introduction]

[Excerpts] Washington yesterday described the telephone conversation which CNN attributed to Yasir 'Arafat and Ibrahim al-Sus as "insulting and odious," but said that the peace process should not be affected by it. The Quai d'Orsay said that "if these remarks were made, they would arouse France's indignation and reprobation." The PLO representative in Paris explained his view to LIBERATION.

[Boltanski] Do you deny the remarks divulged by CNN?

[Al-Sus] I would describe this affair as comical if it were not a monstrous fabrication. I protest the framework of this affair: telephone conversations are bugged, they are fabricated, edited, and broadcast, and nobody in a freedom-loving country like France condemns it. During the Habash affair there must have been around 20 conversations between Mr. 'Arafat and myself either from my home or from the Henri-Dunant Hospital. Some were made calmly. Others were made in a mood of tension and anger. These were private conversations between a head of state and his ambassador. Nobody should be surprised that either of these people should have grown angry with the manipulators of the Habash affair at any given time. The affair wounded us greatly: He was allowed to come to receive medical treatment, and the next day he was under guard. You must admit that we had reason to be angry. [passage omitted]

[Boltanski] During the affair, did Yasir 'Arafat not express his anger at the French authorities?

[Al-Sus] He was often really angry and really worried about George Habash, who could have died in the hospital because of the psychological tension he suffered during his detention. We all felt we had been deceived.

[Boltanski] Will the Habash affair affect relations between the PLO and France?

[Al-Sus] Relations between France and Palestine are much deeper than that. But there is no doubt that the wound will take a long time to heal.

[Boltanski] CNN says it obtained this document from a "Western security service."

[Al-Sus] What is the reason for this fabrication 12 days after the Habash affair? I am worried, first for Mr. 'Arafat's life—it is an incitement to violence—and second for the peace process started in Madrid. Is the Shamir government not trying to create a smokescreen to mask its inflexible policy and its colonization of the occupied territories? Is this not a subterfuge to blame any failure of the preliminary negotiations on the Palestinians when Israel itself is refusing to make the slightest compromise?

[Boltanski] Were you bugged by the French intelligence services?

[Al-Sus] They did their job. But it is not the French authorities who are behind this affair. My suspicions are directed more at European authorities who feel closer to Mosad than to their own country.

[Boltanski] What organization do you have in mind?

[Al-Sus] I will not say anything, but European chancelleries are full of people who are ill disposed toward the Palestinians, and unfortunately, the hysterical campaign against the Palestinians is once against being whipped up by what is being called the Habash affair.

'Arafat Receives Yeltsin Message on Settlements

LD1502185192 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 15 Feb 92

[Text] Brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of the state of Palestine and PLO chairman, today received an important message from Russian President Boris Yeltsin concerning his country's stand toward Israel's settlement activities in the occupied territories. The message came in reply to a previous letter from Abu-'Ammar.

Yeltsin's message emphasized the firm international stand toward the settlement issue and opposition to it on the basis of its contravention of international law and the Fourth Geneva Convention. The message pointed out that the Russian Government considers the freezing of settlements and respect for human rights in the occupied territories of paramount importance in achieving successful progress in the Middle East peace process.

President Yeltsin emphasized the continuation of work through all possible means, including contacts with the United States and other participants in settling the Middle East issue, in order to change Israel's nonconstructive position.

Algeria

Ghozali Promises Elections 'Within Two Years'

LD1802230992 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] In an article published on Tuesday in the newspaper AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, the prime minister affirmed that the state of emergency is temporary and that the solution to Algeria's problem lies in imposing the authority of the state and the law, solving the economic crisis, and confronting that which is wrong in political practice. He accused the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] of wanting to use the constitutional elections to pull apart the democratic institutions. He said that the present government in Algeria will not be lenient concerning the imposition of the authority of the law and that it will face anyone who tries to violate this.

He added that elections will be held within two years and that the FIS has the right to prepare itself for them on the condition that it respects the law. He added that the state of emergency means that the government will not hesitate to use its powers to impose the law forbidding the use of mosques as platforms for political parties. As Mr. Ghozali said: We will not be lenient at all, in following the law, with regard to this issue.

Higher State Council Praises Continued Calm

LD1802185992 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1800 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Excerpts] The Higher State Council met again to examine the action plan put forward by the head of government, a plan spanning economic recovery, employment, and the youth. The second point on the agenda was the draft government reshuffle proposed by Mr. Sid Ahmed Ghozali. In the third point, the Higher State Council recalled that its concern continues to focus on the preservation of a state of law, of human dignity, and physical and moral integrity. Finally, the Higher State Council expressed satisfaction with the development of the situation, with the normal and regular provision of public services, and with the calm displayed by the Algerian people in the past few weeks. The council believes that all the achievements to date will enable it to decisively enter a new stage in its history, end quote.

At the same meeting, the Higher State Council recommended that broad consultations take place on the government's action plan. In fact, at this very moment the government, the Algerian Trades Union Federation, and the employers federation are currently examining ways to restore economic activity. [passage omitted]

Suspense remains, however, concerning the government reshuffle. Will it really take place tomorrow, Wednesday, after the Council of Ministers meeting as already announced? Probably not, for three reasons: The government's general secretary does not announce the holding of a Council of Ministers session; second, Mme. Leila Aslaoui will go to Tunis to attend the Sports in Africa Higher Council; and, finally, Mr. Fodil Bey will grant an interview tomorrow on the Ramadan program drawn up by his ministry. [passage omitted]

FIS' Merani Reportedly Willing To Hold Talks

LD1902114692 Paris Radio France International in French 0630 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] In a message addressed to the authorities a few hours before the famous Friday march that was eventually canceled, it would appear that one of the leaders of the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] was offering, under certain conditions, to talk with the authorities. This is not the line adopted by the movement as a whole. Here are details from Farida Ayari:

[Ayari] If it does not die out from repression, the FIS could disappear as a result of internal divisions. This goes back to May 1991 when several founding members of the religious party publicly stated their disagreement with Abassi Medani and Ali Belhadj concerning the general strike that led to the state of siege.

Among these dissidents was Ahmed Merani who, as the head of the social [word indistinct] was very popular. Considered a traitor by the party's young guard which picked up the reins after the arrest of Medani and Belhadj, Merani says that these two have reportedly told their lawyers that the FIS has changed beyond recognition. Medani and Belhadj would even be prepared to differentiate themselves from the radical wing that appears to be commanding the Front at the moment.

Ahmed Merani thinks that Abdelkader Hachani's decision to take part in the first round of the legislative elections led to catastrophe. As for his being unofficially contacted to sit on the National Consultative Council which the Higher State Council is preparing, he says that he is ready to take part, on the condition that he is listened to and not just put on display.

FIS Willing To Talk If Elections Recognized

NC1802165392 Paris AFP in English 1632 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Algiers, Feb 18 (AFP)—The fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) said Tuesday it was willing to hold talks with Algeria's new Army-backed authorities if they respected the results of a cancelled general election.

The FIS statement was telephoned to AFP and signed by the front's information chief Abderrazak Radjam, who is sought by the police.

The rare statement was dated last Thursday, the eve of a national protest march that the FIS cancelled at the last minute. It said the FIS was "ready for dialogue" if the government respected the "people's choice," a reference to general elections which the FIS was poised to win before the second round was cancelled last month.

14 'Armed Islamic Movement' Members Arrested

LD1802202692 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] An armed gang of 14 persons calling itself the Armed Islamic Movement was arrested while preparing to carry out attacks against security targets in Oran. [video shows individuals with their backs to the camera and seized weapons] Security authorities in the west of the country have recently arrested a group of 14 persons belonging to a movement calling itself the Armed Islamic Movement.

According to the security authorities this group was preparing to attack military targets and police stations last week, in coordination with other cells throughout the country.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified interviewer] To what movement do you belong?

[Unidentified detainee] To the Islamic movement, the Movement of Islamic Jihad.

[Interviewer] What are your objectives?

[Detainee] The objectives of the movement are to seize power and set up an Islamic state.

[Interviewer] What had you prepared?

[Detainee] Molotov cocktails.

[Interviewer] What are they made of?

[Detainee] Fuel oil, acid, gasoline, and something—I forget what is it called. It is like salt.

[Interviewer] What countries have you visited?

[Detainee] Pakistan and Afghanistan. [end recording]

The security authorities indicate that they have discovered weapons, including arms and Molotov cocktails, clothing, and magazines hidden in the house of a group member.

We see all these documents and magazines (?concerning) the declaration of jihad. Most of these documents are Afghan. There are also cassette recordings to incite the people. As for the arms, we can see conventional weapons, wires to strangle people, and bombs of various sizes. As for the medicine, most of it is unavailable on the local market. The clothing includes military uniforms and civilian outfits.

Police Arrest 3 Members of Other Group

LD1802183992 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Sources from the national gendarmerie general command have announced that its services have arrested an armed group belonging to the al-Hijra Wal Takfir organization [religious extremist group] in Tipaza Province.

This group is made up of nine people, three of whom were arrested yesterday and charged with damaging the state's security. It is worth mentioning that the deputy leader of this gang is still on the run and is being sought.

Minister Says 5,000 Persons Arrested in February

LD1802234692 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2300 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Ali Haroun, minister [delegate] for human rights and member of the Higher State Council, affirmed today that about 5,000 people have been arrested since the beginning of February.

In an interview to APS and to the independent daily LE MATIN, Mr. Haroun pointed out that it is possible that this number will be reduced following the screening operation at the four security centers opened at Ouargla, Reggane, Adrar, and i-n-Salah.

Detention Camps Established in Sahara

NC1702182592 Paris AFP in English 1705 GMT 17 Feb 92

[By Eric Wishart]

[Excerpt] Algiers, Feb 17 (AFP)—Muslim fundamentalists disrupted classes and held anti-government protests at several Algerian universities Monday as a human rights spokesman disclosed that special camps had been opened for detainees.

Razzaq Bara, general secretary of the Algerian Human Rights League (LADH), told the daily AL-WATAN that the military-backed authorities had opened five detention camps in the Sahara Desert in southern Algeria to hold thousands rounded up in a crackdown on the Islamic Salvation Front.

He said that the LADH offices in Algiers and elsewhere have been "swamped in recent days by requests from anxious people for information about their relatives, friends and children who had been arrested."

Around 40 riot police broke up an anti-government demonstration by around 100 fundamentalist students outside the main Algiers university Monday morning.

They dispersed demonstrators chanting Islamic slogans who had gathered at the entrance to the building, while the university's security men closed the main gates, trapping the other protesters inside.

The students have formed two committees to demand that the authorities respect the outcome of the elections, which the FIS was set to win before the second round of voting was cancelled.

The demonstrations represent one of the final challenges to the military-backed High State Council which took power a month ago. The security forces have suppressed most street protests, but rarely intervene on university campuses. [passage omitted]

Unrest Breaks Out on University Campuses

Setif Examinations Postponed

LD1602131692 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 16 Feb 92

[Text] The academic council of Setif University has postponed the university examinations due to disturbances at the university. The radio correspondent at Setif, Faisal Ghames, has the details:

[Ghames] The examinations that were scheduled to begin yesterday have now been postponed. The academic council has not yet specified when they will be held. The postponement is due to the tension prevailing at Setif University for about a week and which was characterized by demonstrations and gatherings on the university campus, thereby preventing normal studies at the various faculties of the university.

The Setif branch of the Free General Union of Students today issued a statement reiterating the need to safeguard the university's achievements, and particularly in respect to the students' freedom of expression. It warned of the consequences of the violation of the university campus by the security forces, a matter which could embroil the university in events of unforseeable consequences.

Disturbances at Setif, Blida

LD1802100792 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Text] In Setif Wilaya a group of Setif University students have been trying since the day before yesterday to disturb order on the university campus and to prevent the other students from continuing their studies. According to a statement by the dean of the university reported by APS, a small number of students affiliated to the so-called Students Organization for Legitimacy in the Country were seeking to incite a halt to studies and a sit-in on the university campus. The dean added that a rally was organized this morning on the campus by a small number of students. It soon dispersed, however, after failing to attract a sufficient number of students.

In Blida Wilaya, relative calm prevailed around the university after the recent disturbances caused by a group of Islamic students belonging to the University Movement for Respecting the People's Choice.

The university council, which has been in emergency session since the day before yesterday, has issued a stern warning to those students, emphasizing that the by-laws will be strictly implemented to stop all violations.

In view of this situation the General Union of Free Students organized a rally this morning at Souma University in which it called on the students to be calm and moderate and to organize an information day tomorrow to study the problems and the possibility of finding solutions to them.

APS reports that studies at Souma University continue as normal.

A report by APS from Skikda Wilaya says that there is tension at the technical education high school because the majority of students have decided to stay at home after students organized rallies inside the school and closed the teaching areas in solidarity with the students at other universities. Only students who are nearing graduation have continued their studies, it said.

Annaba Activities Suspended

LD1802101292 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0000 GMT 16 Feb 92

[Text] The teaching and administrative activities at the University of Annaba were suspended yesterday according to a report from APS. The reason was interference by a group of students which claims to belong to a students organization defending legitimacy in the country.

For its part, the Annaba University branch of the Algerian Students Union has appealed to the students to keep the university separate from all political sensitivities.

Constantine Universities 'Paralyzed'

LD1802094692 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 16 Feb 92

[Text] After the marches and protests organized on the campuses of Ain el- Bey and Emir Abdelkader Universities in Constantine by a student committee called the Committee for Protecting the People's Choice [Lajnat Himayat Ikhtiyar al-Sha'b], academic activities were paralyzed today at the two universities.

Groups of students are preventing entry to the institutions by barricading doors with tables and chairs. It is worth noting that security forces did not intervene in the marches organized last week because they were held on the grounds of the university.

Algiers Security Forces Fire Warning Shots

LD1802093792 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Excerpts] [Announcer] Algiers Central University this morning was the scene of disturbances which led to the cordoning off of the university by the security forces and the dispersal of the demonstrating students by firing shots in the air. Radio correspondent Jaheda Khalfaoui has sent us the following report from the university:

[Khalfaoui] The Central University this morning was the scene of disturbances after a student movement close to the Islamic trend and calling itself the Movement for the Preservation of the People's Choice [Harakat al-Hifaz ala-Ikhtiyar al-Sha'ab] called for a protest rally. The rally was attended by students from different departments who tried to enter the university campus but were

stopped by the security forces, who reinforced their presence around the Central University perimeter.

The security forces were forced to fire warning shots to disperse the demonstrating students, who stormed onto the university campus by force.

The students organized themselves into groups chanting familiar antiregime slogans used by a political party.

We have tried to contact the organizers of the rally, but they refused to make any statements either about the rally or who had called it. But according to information we have received, the aim of the rally was to demand the release of arrested teachers and students.

The rumor is that today's rally was just the harbinger of an attempt to declare an open strike at Algiers University in coordination with the strike declared by students of Bab Ezzouar last Wednesday [12 February].

Finally, we must mention that it was estimated that about 300 people participated in the rally.

[Announcer] As for the situation at the University of Constantine, we have received the following report from the Constantine radio station:

[Unidentified correspondent] The situation continues to be tense at the University of Constantine at this time due to the disturbances at the university; they have been continuing for several days. Studies have been disrupted in most of the university's departments. In view of this tension, the nonstriking students have been searching for solutions to ensure a return to normal conditions. They have been actively pursuing moves which would lead to a return to stability at the university and its real role as a cultural and scientific center. [passage omitted]

It should be recalled that the university council held two emergency meetings with a view to adopting practical measures to calm the situation. The council has continually been calling for reason and for keeping the university free from all political tendencies.

Algiers Protest Ends Peacefully

LD1802095392 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Text] A rally by about 300 pro-Islamic Salvation Front students in front of Algiers Central University ended peacefully this afternoon.

The security forces which were rushed to the university premises have now withdrawn.

Students Union Calls for Vigilance

LD1702231792 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Text] In light of the tension at some universities, the National Union of Algerian Students has issued a statement which national radio received a short while ago. The statement says in particular:

The union appeals to patriotic students to be aware of the fate that is being plotted for their universities and to mobilize themselves in a single rank to protect Algeria's reputation and to preserve the accomplishments that Algerian students have achieved and are achieving in all fields. We must be aware that this is our responsibility as a whole before God, the homeland, and history.

That was the statement issued this evening by the National Union of Algerian Students.

Police Confiscate Newspaper on Security Grounds

LD1902121092 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0800 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] The AL-KHABAR daily reported this morning that the latest issue of the weekly AL-MASAR AL-MAGHRIBI/PARCOURS MAGHREBIN was seized the day before yesterday at the press distribution enterprise for central Algeria, which has received orders to stop distributing the weekly on the pretext that issue No. 99 contains articles which infringe on public security.

The same measure was taken at the press distribution enterprise for the west.

Police Deny Confiscation

LD1902115892 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] Sources close to the national gendarmerie command have refuted the report of the seizure of this week's issue of the paper AL-MASAR AL-MAGHRIBI, which was carried by some morning papers today. The sources confirmed that all that happened was that the judicial police officers took a copy of the paper in question to vet it and see if it contained material that might violate the information laws.

Because this was not the case, they permitted its sale on the street, and anyone can obtain a copy of the paper from newsstands today.

Weekly Paper Seized for Security Reasons

LD1702041592 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 16 Feb 92

[Text] The latest issue of the weekly L'EVEIL—not EL-CHOUROUK, as I inadvertently said in the 1600 newscast—was seized today.

This issue of L'EVEIL, published in French, has been seized for containing articles that violate public order, reliable sources say.

Boudiaf, Ghozali Discuss Economic Revival Plan

LD1702221592 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Text] Mohamed Boudiaf, chairman of the Higher State Council, today received Prime Minister Mohamed

Ghozali and discussed with him the government plan for economic revival which was prepared at the request of the Higher State Council.

Prime Minster Ghozali informed Chairman Boudiaf that he will hold a series of consultations with those involved in the social and economic fields on the main aspects of the plan, before making a final decision on the method of executing the plan. At the same time, he will present the revised governmental structure announced by the chairman of the Higher State Council needed to implement the economic revival plan.

Ghozali Announces Low-Income Subsidies

LD1702041192 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2300 GMT 16 Feb 92

[Text] The prime minister's office has issued a statement announcing that Prime Minister Sid Ahmed Ghozali has signed an executive decree implementing measures for direct subsidies to those with low incomes as of 1 February [date as heard].

According to the statement, Algerian workers, those who receive grants, veterans, and victims of the liberation war who are not employed, as well as residents who are without income, will benefit from the subsidy.

Brahimi Discusses Reasons for New Government

NC1502080092 Beirut AL-DIYAR in Arabic 7 Feb 92 p 3

[Interview with Foreign Minister Lakhdar Brahimi by AL-DIYAR correspondent Thurayya 'Asi in Larnaca, Cyprus during the Nonaligned Movement's foreign ministers meeting; date not given]

[Text] ['Asi] How is Algeria?

[Brahimi] Good.

['Asi] There have been reports that the current government may be disbanded.

[Brahimi] No. This will not happen. Brother Boudiaf discussed the issue and said that there will be no changes in the government.

['Asi] How do you envisage the future of confrontation with all the nation's political parties, even the National Liberation Front [FLN]? Boudiaf treated the FLN like any other party when he refused to receive FLN Secretary General Abdelhamid Mehri.

[Brahimi] Brother Boudiaf and brother Mehri are friends, but President Boudiaf is currently not receiving party leaders.

['Asi] The FLN, however, has always been the ruling party and has never been treated like just another party.

[Brahimi] That was then; this is now. The FLN is no longer the ruling party.

['Asi] Do you expect trouble with the parties?

[Brahimi] We hope that there will be no trouble. Citizens are equal in terms of rights and duties under the law. Arrests are made in conformity with the law. No one is arrested only because he is a party member or a party leader. Arrests have been made because specific laws have been broken. The defendants have been referred to investigating judges according to Algerian law. The judges have in fact acquitted many of these defendants after they were proven innocent.

['Asi] Observers believe that the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] will respond strongly to the government decision to ban the use of Islam for political purposes, specifically in the mosques. How would you face such a reaction especially now that the FIS has begun reporting how many of its supporters are killed and injured in clashes with the security forces?

[Brahimi] We are the ones who announce the number of victims, not them. We do not hide what has taken place. We never concealed any news report about the painful incidents, regardless of whether people were injured or killed.

['Asi] Was this done as part of the openness policy that President Chadli Bendjedid adopted?

[Brahimi] Yes.

['Asi] You have often denied that Algeria is going through a "Lebanonization."

[Brahimi] I do not like that expression.

['Asi] Then toward a civil war, if you wish. You say that Algeria is geographically and demographically different and that the circumstances of the Lebanese war were different. Some observers, however, believe that there are similarities.

[Brahimi] We do not believe that we are in danger of a civil war. We believe that this risk has been overcome.

['Asi] How?

[Brahimi] Most of the time civil wars begin with the division of the people, who then resort to fratricidal fighting, which is not the case in Algeria. There is no comparison between the situation in Lebanon and what is taking place in Algeria. The situation in Algeria is different; here the state is trying to impose its authority at a time when some people are carrying out unacceptable acts. That is why we are taking measures to stop them. There is no party against party or side against side.

['Asi] To what extent do you believe that the Algerian authorities, that is the current government, can stand up to all these issues?

[Brahimi] We are certain that we can.

['Asi] Why?

[Brahimi] We know our country and our people.

['Asi] Are you afraid that reactions might grow and once again reach the level that they did in October 1988 and last summer?

[Brahimi] Not at all. There is no indication whatsoever that those events will reoccur. Two weeks have passed since the change and nothing like what you are talking about has happened. No violent reactions similar to those prior to the October events have occurred. Last June a certain party took a stand and made a call. This has not happened this time around. The authorities are now adamant about fully implementing the law.

['Asi] What steps are you taking so that the increasing anger will not be transformed into incidents similar to those of October 1988 and June 1990?

[Brahimi] There is no anger. All the parties recognize the status quo, but they also claim that what happened is unconstitutional. We know that there was a constitutional problem and that it should have been solved in a certain manner. FLN Secretary General Mehri said: We recognize this authority as a realistic one and we ask it to work to restore full constitutional status. Ait Ahmed made a similar comment. He never once called for confrontation with the authorities. In fact, the opposite is true.

['Asi] Do the Algerian authorities have any intention of starting a dialogue with the major parties?

[Brahimi] Not for the time being. The appropriate time for that will come.

['Asi] Some observers believe that the Algerian authorities are provoking the FIS in an attempt to drag it into a confrontation, the result of which will be the dissolution of the FIS.

[Brahimi] Who are you taking about? I have not heard that. Such talk might have come up in Lebanon. I will not comment on what the Lebanese press says, if you don't mind.

['Asi] This is what observers have deduced from events and developments in Algeria, such as detentions, etc.

[Brahimi] Who in Algeria has been arrested other than those who have taken a certain stand and behaved in a manner that damages state security, such as the one who called for a rebellion among the Army ranks, and another who went to the mosque to provoke the people when he did not have the right to even be there.

['Asi] Does this mean that they are creating fear among the authorities?

[Brahimi] No. You said the authorities are provoking the people, which is not true at all. What the authorities are doing is protecting the citizens to safeguard the country and the people, and to preserve public and private freedom. The authorities are doing their job to create the appropriate circumstances for practicing true and sound democracy in a country where the people unanimously agree about coexisting with all sides.

['Asi] What is the fate of the FLN, the product of the 1 million martyrs' revolution?

[Brahimi] The party will meet soon to specify its role. The FLN is an old party, and we have all graduated from its ranks. We have close links to this party although some of us do not perform specific party duties on a daily basis. We are linked to it by a strong moral relationship. We are optimistic about what the FLN Central Committee will achieve in its meetings, which it will resume in two weeks.

['Asi] Former President Chadli Bendjedid's political pluralism and democracy brought Algeria to its present circumstances. How do the new Algerian authorities—the authorities in their new garb—feel about democracy and pluralism?

[Brahimi] This is a very important matter. I believe that everyone in Algeria agrees that a new democratic situation should be established in which one-party hegemony ends, a free press is allowed, and a new economic system is instituted. Both progovernment and opposition parties agree on this. Even the Army agrees. This is a very important matter. The Army fully agrees with this view.

I can say that there is complete national agreement on this issue. The experiment carried out in the past three years had positive as well as negative aspects. Our current predicament has been caused by several factors, including errors made by all parties concerned. Everyone who made an error contributed to the country's current predicament. I believe that one mistake we all made was that we agreed to a democracy without specifying what type of democracy we were agreeing to. We did not agree on the identity of the society that we wanted to establish. What we have to do now, and what we should have done before, is to build a single society. We might differ over some points but I assure you that we all agree on the general framework of the society that we want. Our big error in the past few years was that we decided we wanted democracy, political pluralism, and a free press without specifying why we wanted them. Where is the society that we are building? We must agree on the basic attributes of such a society. If we disagree on the form of the society we want or we discuss establishing two different societies, this will lead to civil war.

I believe that we have learned an important lesson in the past three years which we must not forget. The basic program for the coming period is that we must all spend enough time to reach an agreement on the basic attributes of the society that we want. After that point, the political parties can act as they wish and the press can publish what it wants. There will be no problem because we will have agreed on the general framework of Algerian society.

This will be our basic task in the coming period. Our plans are in agreement with what Chairman Boudiaf says about the foundations of a real and successful democracy. The coming stage's program will take shape in more detail in the economic and political sectors and in the ways that we can conduct a dialogue. This dialogue will, God willing, specify the identity of Algerian society.

Ait Ahmed Says Repression Strengthens FIS

AU1702153592 Vienna PROFIL in German 17 Feb 92 p 50

[Interview with Socialist Forces Front, FFS, Chairman Hocine Ait Ahmed by Georg Hoffmann-Ostenhof; date and place not given: "Against Fundamentalists and Pigs"]

[Text] [Hoffmann-Ostenhof] Since the coup in January the fundamentalist movement has been spreading like wildfire. Can it be contained at all?

[Ait Ahmed] We are now entering a difficult phase. Since the coup our institutions have been regressing. There is now talk only of suppression, security measures, and military tribunals. Every element of the rule of law has been eliminated. Human rights are not respected. Above all, people have been killed—according to official statistics, more than 50 in the last 10 days, and several hundred injured.

[Hoffmann-Ostenhof] You denounced the coup. Many people here in Europe, but also many people in Algeria, see a positive element in connection with the postponement of the second round of elections. They say that this prevented the fundamentalists from taking power and establishing an Islamic state.

[Ait Ahmed] We are not in Haiti. We consider the cancelation of the second round to be blasphemy. The former regime is responsible for the fact that the FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] was successful in the elections. The second round would have been an opportunity for the Socialist Forces Front [FFS] to defeat the FIS at a symbolic level in a dozen constituencies.

[Hoffmann-Ostenhof] At a symbolic level maybe, but in reality...

[Ait Ahmed] To be sure, it would not have been the number of seats—we would have won 50 to 60 seats—that could have constituted a counterweight to the FIS in parliament. But don't forget that the fundamentalists lost more than one and a half million votes compared to the communal elections one year ago. After a second round the president would have had enough real power to keep the FIS within a democratic framework.

[Hoffmann-Ostenhof] The FIS leaders have been arrested, and their organization has been seriously weakened.

[Ait Ahmed] Yes, but the FIS is now really expanding. The repression is strengthening the FIS. The whole of the youth has been mobilized. Just imagine, in one of the suburbs a youth is shot dead by the police. Then the whole residential area promptly revolts. In the past the fundamentalists were given the mosques, but now they have left for the streets.

[Hoffmann-Ostenhof] As the opposition against the power, you are now forming a political unity front with the FIS.

[Ait Ahmed] Nonsense. That is the rumor that the secret service has spread. Before the big clashes two weeks ago we established contacts with FIS people to tell them that we did not accept violence. That is certainly not an alliance. The people here can see very well that we are in opposition and that we are gaining ground on the FIS because we are the force that is working for peace in the country. We are the political movement that is troubling the fundamentalists, and most of all with our slogan "Neither an Islamic state nor a police state." It is crazy—the moderate leaders have been arrested, and the field is left to small extremist groups.

[Hoffmann-Ostenhof] Given this polarization, is there any chance at all for peace in the country?

[Ait Ahmed] Yes, there is a chance: dialogue. Dialogue with the moderate forces.

[Hoffmann-Ostenhof] Even within the present leadership?

[Ait Ahmed] Yes, even though the dominant people there believe that one could finish the FIS off once and for all in two months' time. But that is a great mistake. Suppression drives the people directly to extremism. That is what scares us. In any case, we are prepared to resume dialogue with anyone who wants to restore peace in our country.

Hamas Leader Calls for Dialogue, Not Violence

LD1402132392 Paris Radio France International in French 0630 GMT 14 Feb 92

[Text] When speaking of fundamentalists in Algeria, one thinks automatically of the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] most of the time. There are in fact other movements such as Hamas [Islamic Society Movement], which is less inclined to use violence and which even advocates dialogue, as confirmed by Noureddine Ait Messaoudan, a member of the Hamas National Bureau, to Farida Ayari:

[Begin recording] [Messaoudan] The Hamas movement has always believed that a solution to the crisis currently being experienced by Algeria can only be found through a dialogue. Therefore, the Hamas movement would have tried to avoid this situation of tension and confrontation between the two main parties, the Higher State Committee and the main opposition parties represented by FIS.

On the one hand we advised the Higher State Council to extend a hand to all parties and not to ignore a party represented by the opposition. On the other hand, we asked the FIS to distance itself from trouble in the streets

and, above all, to keep any factional fighting away from the mosques. It seems, however, that neither of them listened to Hamas' ideas, and thus we plunged straight into a dialogue leading nowhere, which has led Algeria to the current situation of confrontation. [end recording]

FLN's Mehri Views Developing Political System

NC1602144892 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1324 GMT 16 Feb 92

[Text] Algiers, 16 Feb (MENA)—Abdelhamid Mehri, secretary general of the Algerian [National] Liberation Front [FLN], has expressed his appreciation for Egypt's stand during the Algerian incidents. He said that the Egyptian position was excellent, for it did not interfere in Algeria's internal affairs but it did show interest in events there. This came in an interview with MENA's Algeria correspondent.

Mehri described the situation in Algeria as very difficult and said that it is not easy to find a way out of the current crisis. There are no perfect solutions, but there are ways to search for better solutions through dialogue with all the political forces, he stated.

Mehri said that due to the current economic and social problems, efforts to replace one-party rule with a multiparty system are expected to run into difficulties.

The FLN secretary general added that the FLN, which has ruled the country for 30 years, is still in a good position, is an effective force, and can play a prominent role in the future.

Mehri said that the FLN has paid for all the negative aspects of government and society. The fact that the FLN won 1.6 million votes in the first round of elections is very encouraging. We are hopeful that the Front will remain a leading force in the country, particularly if it succeeds in internal reform.

Commenting on the preelection rumors that former President Ahmed Ben Bella is ready to join the FLN, Mehri said that Ben Bella's statements to this effect can only be seen as election propaganda, but he added that relations between the former president and the FLN are fraternal and normal.

Asked to give his opinion on the acts of violence that have become common in Algeria, the FLN secretary general said that the FLN is seeking to achieve three objectives: to stop the violence, to preserve national unity, and to solve the current problems through dialogue.

As for Iran and France's position on Algeria, Mehri said: We reject any interference in our internal affairs.

Government Condemns Israeli Attacks in Lebanon

LD1902002392 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0000 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] An authorized source at the Foreign Ministry has made the following statement:

Israel's violation of the sanctity of Lebanese territory, its aggression against the sovereignty of an independent state, and the killing of Lebanese and Palestinian civilians confirm its continuous disdain for all international norms and human rights and the pursuance of a policy of force and aggression. These repeated attacks represent a defiance of all international laws, a threat to the peace process, and a denial of the legitimate rights of the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples.

Boudiaf Receives Mauritanian Foreign Minister

LD1502213792 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 15 Feb 92

[Text] Mr. Mohamed Boudiaf, chairman of the Higher State Council, received today at the Presidency headquarters Mr. Hasni Ould Didi, Mauritanian minister for foreign affairs and cooperation. Hasni Ould Didi delivered a message from [Mauritanian President] Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya and reviewed a few issues concerning bilateral cooperation, in particular maritime fishing and the Nouadhibou refinery. Foreign Minister Lakhdar Brahimi also attended the meeting.

The Mauritanian envoy made the following statement to TV correspondent Fatiha Jaidar:

[Begin Didi recording in progress] ...special relations of amity and friendship linking the two countries. Mauritania now holds the Arab Maghreb Union chairmanship and is continuously consulting with the other countries. Mauritania also expresses the solidarity of the Mauritanian people with the brotherly people of Algeria and our wishes for success in efforts to overcome all temporary problems. [end recording]

Egypt

Interior Minister on Human Rights, Israeli 'Spies'

NC1802185792 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1630 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Cairo, 18 Feb (MENA)—Interior Minister Muhammad 'Abd-al-Halim Musa has asserted that the human rights delegation [not further specified] which left Cairo today praised the treatment inmates are getting in Egypt, the preservation of human rights, and the commitment to regulations within jails.

The interior minister said the delegation visited different Egyptian prisons and received no complaints of a single case of torture in jails. He said the only remark they made was about the overcrowded cells.

Speaking to reporters today after attending a training session at the Non-Commissioned Police Officers Institute, Musa said ministerial apparatuses are eager to preserve a man's dignity and rights, even if that man is guilty and serving jail time.

Responding to a question on a strike staged by inmates at Turah jail, the interior minister said some political

prisoners jailed in connection with the 1981 incidents tried to seize the opportunity of the human rights organization delegation's visit to create a commotion and claim that human rights are not respected at the prison. He added that the delegation was allowed to meet with and listen to these inmates. They were personally assured that inmates are not being subjected to torture, and that the only complaint was over the prison's food.

Minister Musa asserted that the delegation members listened freely to the inmates, who asserted that they enjoy freedom inside the prison and that they have never been humiliated or deprived of their rights during their imprisonment.

Speaking about the Israeli spies who were recently apprehended in Cairo, the interior minister said they made detailed confessions on their involvement in gathering information on military and strategic sites and Egyptian public figures. He said the first spy, Faris Subhi Musrati, who was arrested in a rented apartment in Heliopolis, had asked for a 24-hour respite before making a voluntary full confession on his and his daughter's activity, without any pressure.

The minister of interior added that the spy's son was later apprehended on his way from Libya carrying a false identification card. He added that the spy David Ovitz has also been apprehended and that all the defendants are now being interrogated by the Supreme State Security prosecution.

The interior minister pointed out that he has received the Israeli ambassador and consul in his office, who came to inquire about the spies' association with the Mosad. He said that he assured them that the prosecution is interrogating the spies to find out about the dimensions of their activities.

Minister Musa denied that some Egyptians had been involved with the spies or that they furnished them with important intelligence. He asserted that no Egyptian has been arrested on the charge of spying or collaborating with the Israeli spies.

The minister was asked about the recently discovered extremist organization operating from a computer company office in Heliopolis. He replied that the security organs were committed to the law in apprehending the defendants and the documents proving their involvement in gathering intelligence and supplying certain organizations with information in order to undermine the Egyptian regime.

He added that the computer company office has been sealed off and all the documents referred to the prosecution, which unsealed the office, opened the documents, transferred the seized physical evidence, and started to interrogate the defendants.

The minister of interior asserted that the case is now in the hands of the judiciary, and that it is the only organ entitled to issue a verdict. He remarked that this refutes claims by those who try to cast doubt on the measures adopted by the security organs to apprehend these persons.

Attempt To Kill Israeli Ambassador Reported

NC1902094892 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 17 Feb 92 p 11

[Text] An attempt to assassinate Israeli Ambassador Efrayim Dowek and Avraham Shoval, the embassy's administrative attache, in the al-Ma'adi area has failed.

The four attackers used a jeep in the operation. They dropped identity cards showing that they were workers from al-Haram Street. The cards proved to be authentic, but were found to be exact replicas of cards with different names. [sentence as published] When the four who were named on the cards were detained it was determined that they had nothing to do with the assassination attempt. The authenticity of the identity cards indicates a penetration of the Egyptian security organs.

Member of Kuwaiti Royal Family Murdered

NC1402100992 Cairo MENA in English 0845 GMT 14 Feb 92

[From the press review]

[Excerpt] Cairo, 14 Feb (MENA)—A Filipino maid servant stabbed and killed Shayka Latifah 'Abdallah al-Jabir al-Sabah [member of the Kuwaiti royal family] last night, AL-AHRAM reported prominently on its front page.

The servant said she stabbed her employer after a quarrel over her refusal to allow the servant to go to the Phillipines to see her children. [passage omitted]

Further on Arrival of Libya's al-Bishari

NC1802193992 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1855 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Cairo, 18 Feb (MENA)—Ibrahim al-Bishari, secretary of the Libyan People's Committee for External Liaison and International Cooperation, and his delegation arrived in Cairo this evening for a visit of several days.

Upon arrival, al-Bishari stated that the visit falls within the context of constant consultations and excellent relations with Egypt.

He said that in view of the crisis in connection with certain allegations, he found it necessary, or rather a must, to deepen contacts and consultations with the brother Egyptians to find the correct and honorable approach to emerging from the situation by sparing the region any disputes or crises.

Al-Bishari paid tribute to President Husni Mubarak in his name and on behalf of the Libyan people for the role he has played to contain the crisis. He also paid tribute to the

Egyptian people—as represented in their parties, organizations, newspapers, and authors—for the solidarity they have demonstrated with the Libyan Jamahiriyah.

He added: We are seeking an honorable and peaceful approach to containing the crisis, which might reflect adversely on the entire region.

Asked whether there are new proposals which Libya plans to present to the Arab League and whether the Libyan defendants will be tried in a neutral country, al-Bishari said: We will see after we discuss the matter from all aspects and hold consultations with our brothers.

The Libyan official was received by Ambassador 'Umar Jad, assistant foreign minister, and the Libyan charge in Cairo.

Differences Over Sudan Border 'Increasing'

NC1902093992 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 17 Feb 92 p 12

[Text] Differences between Egypt and Sudan are increasing. A new dispute over the border arose a few days ago when Egyptian aircraft launched a mock raid, forcing the Canadian International Oil Company to assemble and evacuate 430 employees. The Sudanese Government sent an air defense battalion of 670 officers and soldiers armed with missiles and light weapons to the disputed Hala'ib area between the two countries.

Foreign Minister Interviewed on Peace Process

PM1402093992 Jeddah 'UKAZ in Arabic 8 Feb 92 p 5

[Interview with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa by 'Uhud Makram in Bonn during his visit to Germany; date not given]

[Excerpt] [Makram] The two major parties in Israel have decided to dissolve the Knesset on 17 March and hold early elections on 23 June. In your view, what are the effects of these developments on the peace process and the continuation of the Arab-Israeli negotiations?

[Musa] Of course we hope that the political crisis in Israel will not hamper peace negotiations or the continuation of its successive stages. But I would like also to point out that Israel did not cooperate sincerely during the Moscow multilateral conference on the Middle East. The Israeli position is still, until this moment, remote from the crux of the Arab-Israeli conflict—the Palestinian problem. Israel is also refusing to end its occupation of Syria's Golan Heights and continues to occupy southern Lebanon—which represents a major obstacle to arriving at the success required for the peace process and realizing the aims of this process; namely, establishing a lasting, comprehensive, and just peace in the Middle East.

[Makram] What do you feel about the German side with regard to Germany's view of and position on the peace process?

[Musa] The German side clearly affirmed that Germany is interested in the continuation and success of the peace process in the Middle East. Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher emphasized the positive German role in that regard.

[Makram] You discussed with the German minister the position of the new independent states in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union, especially their possession of nuclear weapons and the possibility of the illegal transfer and proliferation of these weapons. What is the Egyptian position on this issue?

[Musa] The U.S. secretary of state emphasized that Egypt is committed to its role in international cooperation to prevent the the illegal transfer of these nuclear weapons from the newly independent states. We believe that Germany shares our interest in this issue. In fact, this matter occupies the heart of the new German diplomacy, especially in the wake of German reunification and Germany's current position and status in Europe. [passage omitted]

Columnist Attacks Opposition Parties, Leaders

NC1202173392 Cairo MAYU in Arabic 10 Feb 92 pp 1, 5

["Without Sensitivity" column by Samir Rajab]

[Text] The funniest and strangest thing the communists in Egypt are claiming now is that the collapse of the Soviet Union, which completely destroyed Marxist theories and applications, is merely a temporary phase and that Marxism will return, more powerful than ever before.

Just imagine how stubborn and narrow-minded these people must be.

The people of the former Soviet Union heaved a sigh of relief when the nightmare ended, as did everyone in Eastern Europe. Nevertheless, our comrades in Egypt continue to dream and delude themselves.

The prime minister, Dr. 'Atif Sidqi, delivered a conclusive and decisive speech in the People's Assembly the day before yesterday in which he said that the ideas of Khalid Muhyi-al-Din, secretary general of the National Progressive Unionist Grouping [NPUG], have become history. He then presented Muhyi-al-Din and the other members with documents and evidence that the economic reform measures in Egypt are progressing and yielding results.

After the People's Assembly session concluded, Khalid Muhyi-al-Din hastened to convene a meeting with the leaders of his party to discuss the future of communism.

What future, Mr. Khalid, when the past and present of communism are gone, never to return—that disgusting past that presented the worst image of the worst political experiment in history.

We still have the problem that some opposition groups nestle among our ranks, and though they are few, they insist on imposing their existence without any legal backing, legitimacy, or logic. For example, who are the Nasirites, represented by Muhammad Fa'iq, who was minister of information during the times of totalitarianism?

Egypt cannot and will not be ruled from graves, regardless of the attempts and slogans raised in this respect. The reason is simple: The times are no longer the same as before, due to the natural progression of life. We all appreciate our deceased President Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir as an Egyptian ruler who never once abandoned his national duties, but now we live in a time that respects the dignity and humanity of mankind and democracy grows and prospers every day. Today, group leadership is significant and opposing opinions are valued.

At the same time, we admit that this age is an extension of the July revolution, of which we are all a result.

Therefore, why do we cling to the busts of 'Abd-al-Nasir and insist on reviving the dead, who had both good and bad points?

In addition to the NPUG, there are those who call themselves Marxists. They are proud of it and make a point of telling everyone who they are. What is most disgusting is that their faces never go red with shame, despite the fact that they know the people of Egypt rejected them a long time ago, because the people are religious and respect goodness and moral bases. They are attempting to infiltrate the various groups with the objective of writing the law according to their own desires. They resort to the courts every now and then, forgetting that the judiciary in Egypt is the best expression of the people's conscience.

The same applies to the Muslim Brotherhood, who for a long time have been following a policy that proves they are neither brothers nor Muslims. They say the exact opposite of what they do. They disguise themselves behind the true religion while their behavior proves that they are neither forgiving, merciful, nor sympathetic, and they do not care about stability in society.

The people know all these details. That is why they moved away from them and refused to allow their minds to be constrained by the brothers, whose hope it was to shackle the minds and thinking of the people.

I believe that the law issued recently by the administrative court stipulating that the Muslim Brotherhood cannot return is new evidence that the people will reject them until the day of judgment.

In all countries, no individual or group of individuals dares assume the right to represent the people or express the opinions of others except when both sides express a mutual desire for this.

In our case, some groups regrettably believe that they can strip the citizen of his will at any time. This in itself is an unforgivable crime.

'Break-In' at Misr al-Fatah Headquarters Detailed

NC1202111892 Cairo MISR AL-FATAH in Arabic 3 Feb 92 p 1

[Text] Ibrahim Zaydan, first deputy leader of the Misr al-Fatah party, has made a statement about thugs entering the party headquarters in al-Duqqi. Zaydan said that the incident reflects some people's attitude in dealing with Egyptian opposition parties.

He directly accused Samir Rajab, chief editor of the newspaper MAYU, of organizing the break-in from his own office and hiring thugs to do the job. The party's deputy leader added that Rajab sent his own journalists to the scene early in the morning and before anybody knew about the incident, posted a circular at MAYU telling his staff to follow up Misr al-Fatah party reaction, and deducted two days pay from journalists who refused to cover the story.

Zaydan said that he filed complaints against those who led the thugs, including Husam Kamil, a lawyer who pretends to be a counselor; Kamal 'Abd-al-Hamid, a waiter; Mahmud 'Aziz, a former party member who was expelled and charged with embezzling party funds; and Fathi al-Shaykh. Zaydan blamed the thugs for stealing documents and money from party headquarters, noting that most of them admitted being paid to break in but did know who had hired them. Engineer Rida al-Shaji', party deputy leader, followed up the police investigations.

Zaydan praised the party's young cadres [al-kata'ib] for regaining control of the headquarters in under a minute, scattering the hired hands and expelled members like frightened rats, and throwing the thugs out. He added that the young cadres would deal firmly with anyone contemplating aggression against the party, and stressed that such attempts only make the party more determined to stick to its political path. Zaydan criticized police who refused to let journalists into the party headquarters.

Party figures and newspaper staff have declared their allegiance to the leadership of 'Aliy-al-Din Salih, who was elected by the party congress and is the chairman of the newspaper's board of directors, party founder, and successor to Ahmad Husayn.

Libya

Court Rejects Extradition in Lockerbie Case

NC1802153092 Paris AFP in English 1455 GMT 18 Feb 92

[By Acil Tabbara]

[Excerpts] Tripoli, Feb 18 (AFP) - A Libyan High Court judge Tuesday rejected Britain's renewed demand for the extradition of two Libyans implicated in the bombing of a U.S. jetliner over Scotland three years ago.

Judge Ahmad al-Tahir al-Zawi said after a hearing into the affair that the failure of Washington and London to provide detailed results of their investigations into the December 1988 bombing had blocked Libya's own probe on the attack.

He told a press conference the charge sheets submitted by the United States and Britain lacked sufficient evidence for the indictment of the two suspects.

And he asserted that, in any case, Libyan law did not permit the extradition of its nationals to be tried abroad. But he did say that Libyan investigations into the affair were continuing.

The two Libyan men were then presented to the press.

"We are innocent," Abd-al-Basit 'Ali Muhammad al-Miqrahi said, while Al-Amin Khalifah Fhimah kept mum. [passage omitted]

In explaining his ruling Tuesday, al-Zawi said, "Everybody is innocent until his guilt is proven."

"Now the indictment was communicated to us without its being supported by tangible elements," he said.

"We asked the British and American judges to provide us with the minutes of their investigations, particularly the result of the analysis of the debris from the plane and the black box as well as statements from witnesses," he said.

"Unfortunately, we have received no response and we don't understand why these reports are witheld," he said.

He stressed that Libya made "many concessions to resolve this problem which has turned into a political affair."

It has proposed the creation of an international investigating committee, recourse to the World Court of Justice and the dispatch of U.S. and British judges to Libya.

"All these proposals were rejected," he added.

He said that Miqrahi and Fhimah, two Libyan Airlines employees, were regularly being questioned.

"Their passports have been seized. They are under surveillance and cannot leave the country, not even Tripoli," he said.

The two men arrived under police escort Tuesday at the High Court Court, where about 100 journalists had gathered.

"The lack of cooperation of American and British judicial authorities forces us to rely on ourselves to reach the truth," he said.

"We must start the inquiry from the beginning and that will take some time," he said, refusing to set a time. "The investigation even threatens to hit an impasse."

Journalists Barred From Trial

NC1902104692 London MBC Television in Arabic 2300 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Libyan authorities have banned foreign journalists and correspondents from attending the trial of the two Libyans accused of downing the plane over Lockerbie. It was hoped that the trial would be public.

[Correspondent Isma'il al-Amin] Upon their arrival at the Supreme Court building in Libya, 'Abd al-Wasit 'Ali Muhammad al-Mijrahi and al-Amir Khalifah Fahimah, the two Libyans accused of blowing up the American plane over Lockerbie, Scotland, faced a crowd of journalists, who rushed toward them, posing a variety of questions.

It was believed that Libyan authorities would permit the media to attend the court session and listen to the statements of the two defendants. At the last minute, however, correspondents were told that the court would hold a closed session. Therefore, the media had to be satisfied with the clear fact that the two defendants had not disappeared or been executed as some press reports said recently.

Despite the fact that the journalists were not allowed to question the two defendants, the British paper THE DAILY MAIL published an interview today with the two defendants in which they declared that they are innocent.

Strong pressure continues to be applied to have the two handed over. Libyan Judge Ahmad al-Zawi said that this is impossible because it is contrary to Libyan law.

The case of the plane explosion, in which 270 persons were killed, has become a thorny issue for Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi.

Immediately after the incident, the belief prevailed in U.S. and British intelligence circles that Syria and Iran were involved in the operation, but this belief was later dispelled for political reasons, according to some international observers.

A senior aide to Yasir 'Arafat says that PLO investigations prove that Middle Eastern states are behind the incident, not Libya. [Video shows two suspects entering the court, accompanied by police and surrounded by journalists]

Al-Qadhdhafi Visits al-Fatih University 18 Feb

LD1802152792 Tripoli JANA in English 1437 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Tripoli/al Nowar [February] 18/JAMAHARIYA NEWS AGENCY—The leader of the revolution today gave a lecture to the students of social sciences in the green auditorium at the University of al-Fatih. When the

leader of the revolution arrived at the al-Fatih University, and toured some of the University's colleges, the student masses surged towards him, chanting resounding revolutionary slogans which can only show how great is the support among the student masses for the great al-Fatih revolution, as well as its' leader, Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi and the continued march on the path towards its' goals and its' principles wrought by the great al-Fatih revolution in order to liberate the individual, wherever that may be, from exploitation and slavery.

In their chants of support the student masses asserted their definite determination and their solid will to continue to spread the leading ideology of the the great al-Fatih revolution and their eternal duty to assert only humanitarian and glorious dictates. The student masses also re-asserted in their chants and slogans their perpetual willingness to defend the great al-Fatih revolution, its' leader and great cultural achievements which cover all aspects of our lives and changed the flow of life in Libya towards a better future through a series of developments achieved in all sectors. The student masses also asserted that the generation of the al-Fatih revolution is a generation which does not wish to live without freedom and pride on its' land. They also said that this generation is willing to defend its' nation and its' revolution.

Burkinabe President Compaore Arrives in Tripoli

LD1802094592 Tripoli Great Jamahiriyah Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 16 Feb 92

[Excerpts] President Blaise Compaore, chairman of the Popular Front in the Jamahiriyah of Burkina Faso, and his delegation arrived in Tripoli this afternoon on a visit to the Great Jamahiriyah.

President Compaore was given a great reception at Tripoli International Airport, where Major 'Abd-al-Salam Ahmad Jallud was in the forefront of those welcoming him. [passage omitted]

President Compaore made a statement to the JANA representative. He began by expressing his delight at visiting the Great Jamahiriyah, and praised the depth of friendship and cooperation between the two countries. He reasserted his country's complete support for and solidarity with the Great Jamahiriyah in confronting the new colonial campaign. He praised the Great Jamahiriyah's civilized stance and wise policy in dealing with the incidents of the Pan Am and UTA airplanes by submitting the case to the International Court of Justice, or any other neutral international judiciary, out of its desire to reveal the truth and its adherence to international covenants and laws.

In his statement, President Compaore, citing the documents and decisions of the Organization of African Unity and the UN Charter, called for respect for the sovereignty of member countries and the resolution of all problems through dialogue and understanding, in order to preserve security and peace in the world. [passage omitted]

Received by al-Qadhdhafi

LD1802094592 Tripoli Voice of Greater Arab Homeland in Arabic 2315 GMT 16 Feb 92

[Excerpt] Yesterday evening [16 February], the brother leader of the revolution received President Blaise Compaore, chairman of the Popular Front of the Jamahiriyah of Burkina Faso. The meeting was attended by the ministers of external relations, finance, and planning of the Burkinabe Jamahiriyah. The brother secretary of the General People's Committee for Communications and Transport, the brother secretary of the Libyan-Arab People's Bureau in the Burkinabe Jamahiriyah, and the Burkinabe ambassador in the Great Jamahiriyah were also present at the meeting. [passage omitted]

Meets Ghana, Niger Officials

AB1802095992 Ouagadougou Radiodiffusion Nationale du Burkina Radio in French 1900 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Text] The President of Burkina Faso continues his Libyan visit. After two meetings with Ghanaian and Niger political officials present in Tripoli, Blaise Compaore again held private talks with Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan revolution. Here are the details from our special correspondent to Libya, Lamoussa Robgo.

[Begin recording] The head of state's day began with audiences granted to two officials. The first was Kojo Tsikata, deputy chairman of the Provisional National Defense Council, PNDC, the ruling regime in Ghana; the second was the Niger state secretary for foreign affairs. Their discussions focused on relations between Ouagadougou and Accra on the one hand, and Ouagadougou and Niamey on the other.

After these two meetings, President Blaise Compaore held further talks with Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi in a suburb about 50 km away from Tripoli, the capital. As a novelty, their talks took place under a tent in the presence of the number two man of the Ghanaian regime, Kojo Tsikata.

Under another tent, the Burkinabe and Libyan delegations began their deliberations in line with the Libya-Burkina Faso Joint Commission of cooperation. They mainly discussed progress on the deliberations of the last meeting of the joint commission, held last February.

It should be recalled that before this morning's meeting, the head of state held private talks yesterday evening with the leader of the revolution. Bilateral cooperation was the focus of their talks.

President Blaise Compaore's 72-hour friendly working visit will end tomorrow morning. [end recording]

Joint Committee Convenes

LD1802100592 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1930 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Text] The Libyan Arab-Burkinabe Joint Committee commenced its meetings in Tripoli this evening. The committee will discuss the horizons of cooperation in various fields between the Great Jamahiriyah and Burkina Faso.

The meetings were attended by the brother secretary of the General People's Committee for Economy and Planning; the brother secretary of the General People's Committee for Communications and Transport; and brother Issa Konate, Burkinabe minister of external relations, in addition to a number of experts and executives from the two friendly countries.

The brother secretary of the General People's Committee for Economy and Planning delivered a speech at the opening session. He began by welcoming the members of the joint committee and hoping for positive results that will consolidate the existing fraternal and amicable relations between the two friendly countries.

He emphasized the importance of consolidating cooperation between the two countries, particularly in light of the current circumstances, in which the world faces a coalition of unjust forces aimed at obstructing small countries' aspirations to develop.

Brother Issa Konate reiterated that his country stands by the Great Jamahiriyah in the confrontation of the new colonialist campaign. He expressed Burkina Faso's insistence on consolidating its relations with the Great Jamahiriyah in all fields. He stressed that these meetings are another step toward consolidating bilateral cooperation.

During these meetings, cooperation between the Great Jamahiriyah and Burkina Faso in all economic, technical, industrial, and agricultural fields will be discussed.

Ghanaian Official Arrives in Tripoli 16 Feb

LD1802203292 Tripoli Voice of Greater Arab Homeland in Arabic 0115 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Excerpt] Kojo Tsikata, member of the Ghanian Provisional National Defense Council in charge of foreign affairs and security, arrived in Tripoli yesterday evening for a visit to the Great Jamahiriyah.

Colonel Abu Bakr Yunis Jabir was in the forefront of those who welcomed him.

Meets Col. Jabir

LD1802205592 Tripoli JANA in English 1826 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Tripoli, al-Nawwar [February] 18, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—Col. Abu Bakr Yunis Jabir today received Kojo Tsikata member of the Temporary Defence Council [Provisional National Defense Council] and responsible for foreign and security affairs in Ghana who is currently visiting the Great Jamahiriyah.

Niger Finance Minister Meets Treasury Secretary

LD1602221392 Tripoli JANA in English 1657 GMT 15 Feb 92

[Text] Tripoli, al-Nawwar [February] 15, JAMAHIRYAH NEWS AGENCY—The secretary of the People's Committee for the Treasury and president of the Council of Governors of the Islamic Bank for Development met with the Finance Minister of Niger [title as received] Raul Chavelie who is in Great Jamahiryah to take part in the 16th session of the Council of the Governors of the Islamic Bank.

The meeting discussed relations of cooperation between Great Jamahiryah and the Republic of Niger and ways and means to develop these relations.

The minister thanked Great Jamahiryah for hosting the session and lauded the depth and strength of fraternal relations linking the Libyan Arab people with the people of Niger.

He lauded the continued assistance and backing provided by the Jamahiryah to the Islamic countries.

Mauritania

Talks Fail, University Strike Continues

AB1802203592 Libreville Africa No. 1 in French 1230 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] In spite of the government's calls to students to resume attending classes, the latter have maintained their position. Hence, the security forces have been deployed around some schools in the Mauritanian capital. From Nouakchott, here is a report by Salem Mejbou Salem:

[Begin Salem recording] The Mauritanian Government has just officially acknowledged the crisis that has struck Nouakchott University. Students have been on strike for two weeks. Yesterday evening, during a radio and television broadcast, National Education Minister Moctar Ould Haye accused a group of agitating students of being at the bottom of this strike. He said that most students wanted classes to resume in the various departments, but, the minister added, the strike leaders use violence in classrooms to show their opposition to this move.

Moctar Ould Haye warned that the Mauritanian Government was about to take measures to enable those who want to go school to do so. These measures will also concern the protection of university property. However, the minister did not give any details on the nature of the measures to be taken.

In the meantime, the student coordination body has decided to continue the strike after three fruitless meetings with the Nouakchott University chancellor. These sessions were a failure.

This morning, several antiriot units were seen in parts of the Mauritanian capital, notably between the Young Girls Junior High School and the Nouakchott Higher Institute of Islamic Sciences.

The students have been demanding, among other things, scholarships for all students; the removal of harassment concerning transportation problems; and the opening of a student cafeteria, health unit, or the construction of a student dormitory.

The minister of national education emphasized that some of the student demands were union-oriented and extracurricular. On the other hand, he said that he favored examining and finding a solution to realistic demands. [end recording]

Morocco

King Hassan Receives Libya's al-Humaydi

LD1802182592 Rabat Moroccan Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] His Majesty King Hassan II today received Major al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi, member of the Revolution Command Council of the Libyan Jamahiriyah and envoy of the Libyan leader to his majesty the king, at the royal palace in Marrakech.

Royal Adviser Meets With al-Humaydi

LD1802101492 Tripoli JANA in English 0850 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Casablanca, al-Nawwar [February] 18, JANA/Arab Maghreb Union—Major al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi yesterday received brother Ahmed Ben Souda the adviser of King Hassan II king of sisterly Morocco. Various media organisations in [word indistinct] paid considerable attention to the participation of the Great Jamahariyah in the massive popular ceremony organised by the Socialist Union for Popular Forces to pay homage to the Moroccan freedom fighter Abderrahim Bouabid 40 days after he passed away.

Government Rejects EEC Financial Agreement

LD1602101592 Rabat MAP in English 1256 GMT 15 Feb 92

[Text] Strasbourg, Feb. (MAP)—Morocco officially renounced the Moroccan-EEC financial treaty and addressed to Portugal, acting chairman of the EEC Council, on February 12 a letter in this respect, European MPs told the Moroccan news agency 'MAP'.

Moroccan Minister of State in Charge of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Abdellatif Filali had explained last January the Moroccan stand concerning the rejection of the treaty under which the EEC was to extend 463 million ECUs [European currency units] to Morocco for the coming four years. European Socialist and ecological MPs were at the origin of the rejection by the European Parliament of the treaty arguing violations of human rights and impediments to the settlement of the Sahara issue.

The EC Council Presidency had asked the European Parliament last February 11th to reconsider the rejection of the treaty, but the request was turned down by the enlarged bureau of the Parliament.

Sudan

Suspected Officers Investigated; Protests Continue

PM1802144292 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 12 Feb 92 pp 1, 4

['Uthman Mirghnai report: "Officers Arrested on Charges of Planning To Stage Coup"]

[Excerpts] London—While protest demonstrations continued in Khartoum, Omdurman, and their suburbs yesterday, and while security authorities launched large-scale arrest campaigns that included a number of women and girls, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT learned that the Sudanese authorities have dismissed 19 armed forces officers and started to investigate a number of them on charges of "dealings with a foreign state in order to overthrow the regime."

Informed military sources said that the investigation of the officers dismissed last week follows the arrest of another 41 officers, most of them from the Air Force, on charges of planning to bomb a Sudanese Revolution Council meeting.

According to the sources, the retired officers are: Brigadier Dr. Muhammad 'Abdallah Hatim, Colonel al-Sadiq Taha, Col. Sayyid Himmat, Col. 'Uthman Muhammad, Col. 'Isam al-Jili, Col. Mustafa al-Tali, Col. Sayf-al-Din Muhammad Ahmad, Col. Ibrahim Bashir, Col. 'Abd-al-Mun'im Hasan 'Awad-al-Karim, Col. 'Abd-al-Halim Sayyid Ahmad Babakr, Lieutenant Col. Hasan 'Abd-al-Rahman, Lt. Col. Engineer Husayn Muhammad al-Hasan, Lt. Col. Muhammad Bayn, Navy Lt. Col. Khawjali Mubarak Khawjali, Lt. Col. 'Isam Mahmud, Major Wahbi Salih, and Maj. Khalifah Babakr al-Tajani.

Meanwhile, demonstrations have continued in Khartoum, Omdurman, and al-Thawrah to protest recent price rises. Demonstrations in al-Thawarah reached the borders of Suq Omdurman, while students at Cairo University-Khartoum Campus led a demonstration toward al-Suq al-'Arabi which was, however, confronted very violently by the security forces.

Informed security sources have revealed that 300 people were arrested during recent demonstrations. They include a number of women and girls. The sources said

that demonstrators were severely beaten up after their arrest. The sources described the condition of some of them as serious. [passage omitted]

Other sources told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that most of the arrests took place in Omdurman and al-Thawrah on Sunday and Monday.

The sources expect demonstrations to escalate today and tomorrow following the referendum held by Khartoum University students yesterday concerning boycotting the exams and "joining protest demonstrations in the Sudanese streets."

The university's professors yesterday issued a strongly worded statement in which they protested everything that was happening at the university. They emphasized their solidarity with the students.

The professors said in their statement that "the university is experiencing a severe predicament, and the unity of all university forces is needed to extricate it from that predicament." The statement added: "The university has never experienced any predicament like this since its founding."

The statement condemned the appointment of the university's director and the faculties' deans "on a political basis." [passage omitted]

Al-Bashir Decree Reorganizes Interior Ministry

EA1402131092 Khartoum SUNA in English 1642 GMT 12 Feb 92

[Text] Khartoum, 12 Feb (SUNA)—The chairman of the Revolution Command Council, Gen 'Umar al-Bashir, issued here Wednesday a decree ordering the reorganisation of the Interior Ministry.

The decree established nine general departments in the ministry: public order, prisons, civil defence, wildlife, passports, immigration, nationality and identity cards, financial and administrative affairs, training, information, morale and public relations, and borders.

Furthermore, the decision ordered the establishment of a police higher academy, information centre, police emergency department, coordination office for the state and general investigation department. All the civil employees in the police's auxiliary services sector will be treated as military cadres. The decision has been issued within the implementation of an earlier decree putting the regular forces under one name and one leadership.

Kuwait

Government Ready To Receive Aircraft Held in Iran

LD1802181892 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1630 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Kuwait, 18 Feb (KUNA)—Sources at the Foreign Ministry told KUNA today that Mr. Fawzi 'Abd-al'Aziz al-Jasim, Kuwaiti ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Iran, has delivered an official message to the competent authorities in Tehran expressing Kuwait's readiness to send a technical-legal team to take delivery of the Kuwaiti aircraft in Iran.

The Iraqi regime stole the aircraft during its occupation of Kuwait and sent them to Baghdad. After repainting them, it then transferred the planes to Iran to prevent their destruction during the air strikes against Iraq by the international coalition forces, which sought to expel Iraq from Kuwait.

Last Thursday Iran announced through President Hashemi-Rafsanjani its readiness to deliver the Kuwaiti aircraft to Kuwait immediately. At a reception with the speaker and members of the [Kuwaiti] National Council last Thursday, during their tour of the region, the Iranian president added that the Kuwaiti aircraft were held in Iran as a trust and would be returned to their owners when they wanted them.

UK's Hogg Meets With Foreign Minister

LD1802164892 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1352 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Kuwait, 18 Feb (KUNA)—Shaykh Salim al-Sabah, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, had a meeting with Douglas Hogg, British minister of state for foreign affairs, at his office this morning.

In a statement to KUNA after the meeting Shaykh Salim said that he and Mr. Hogg had discussed the Security Council resolutions on Iraq, particularly those concerning the issues of releasing Kuwaiti prisoners and hostages, the process of defining the Kuwait-Iraq border, and the subject of reparations. In this context Shaykh Salim emphasized that the Kuwaiti and British sides agreed on the need to step up pressures on the Iraqi regime to implement all of the Security Council resolutions, which expressed the international will.

Shaykh Salim pointed out that he discussed with Minister Hogg a number of issues pertaining to bilateral relations between Kuwait and Britain, including the security agreement recently signed by the two sides, relations between Kuwaiti and British institutions, and trade between the two countries.

The deputy prime minister and foreign minister added that he and the British official also reviewed the situation in the Gulf and Arab arenas, and the latest developments in the Middle East peace process. The British minister arrived here last night on a two-day visit.

Urges 'Pressure' Against Iraq

LD1802215292 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1908 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Kuwait, 18 Feb (KUNA)—The British minister of state at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office emphasized the importance of keeping the pressure on the Iraqi regime until it completely submits to all international resolutions, particularly those concerning the immediate release of Kuwaiti prisoners of war and the abolition of weapons of total destruction.

On leaving Kuwait today after a two-day visit, he told the press that it would be possible—within the framework of international legitimacy—to use force against the Iraqi regime if it continued to follow policies of evasion and procrastination in implementing international resolutions.

Hogg, who was visiting Kuwait for the first time, expressed his hope that the defense understanding memorandum between Kuwait and Britain signed on 11 February would make it possible to establish higher-level relations between the two countries. He also expressed his hope to sign similar agreements with the other GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] countries.

Hogg, the 10th British official to visit Kuwait since its liberation, inspected the residence of the international peacekeeping force for Iraq and Kuwait.

The British minister held talks with Shaykh Sa'ad al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, heir apparent and prime minister, and Shaykh Salim al-Sabah al-Salim, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, on bilateral relations and the efforts to rebuild Kuwait after the destruction caused by the Iraqi occupation.

Answering a question on the threat to the region represented by the head of the Iraqi regime, Hogg emphasized: "Saddam Husayn is now less dangerous than he was two years ago." He referred to the Iraqi defeat by the coalition forces which evicted the Iraqi forces from Kuwait a year ago, and said that the presence of Saddam in power represents a threat but a less serious one than before.

In this context he emphasized the importance of the collective efforts of the GCC countries to consolidate their military ties with each other as well as the United Kingdom and the United States. He pointed out the need for collective security and collective security measures among the GCC member states through military coordination, consolidating the capabilities of their armies, and establishing a unified army for themselves.

As for Iran's role in the security of the Gulf region, Hogg pointed out that "it is too early to talk about the structure of Iran's role in the security of the region." He referred to the fact that Iran is hoping to improve its relations with the West.

Regarding the possibility of toppling Iraqi President Saddam Husayn, the British diplomat said: "Only the Iraqi people can topple Saddam's regime."

He refused to comment on the current visit to a number of countries in the region by CIA Director Robert Gates.

As for the Western-Libyan conflict over the Lockerbie incident, Hogg expressed his hope that that conflict would be solved peacefully. He added: "Libya must respond to the Western demands and UN Security Council Resolution 731."

Oil Minister Calls for Larger Production Quota

LD1402141492 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1148 GMT 14 Feb 92

[Excerpts] Geneva, 14 Feb (KUNA)—Kuwaiti Oil Minister Dr. Hamud al-Ruqbah expects Kuwait's oil output to reach 1.5 million barrels per day [b/d] by the end of 1992. He said in an interview with KUNA here today that "we are planning to achieve this level of output." He said that Kuwait wants an OPEC total output quota larger than the one allocated to it by the July 1990 agreement—1.5 million b/d—especially because Kuwait's oil production capacity will exceed 1.5 million b/d at the end of this year. He added that the quota, which was frozen following the sinful Iraqi aggression against Kuwait, "is no longer acceptable, and we must have a new quota with a new production ceiling. He further clarified this position by saying that Kuwait was prevented from producing oil for a year and had not produced its allocated quota for more than two years. As for current oil production, since 9 February Kuwait has been producing about 600,000 b/d, including in the neutral zone. He added that Kuwait's average output will be 847,000 b/d in the second quarter of this year and that the refining capacity will total 270,000 b/d.

The oil minister said that all OPEC member states support the setting of the benchmark price at $21 per barrel. As for the current OPEC meeting, at which member states are trying to set a new production ceiling with the aim of raising the price of oil, the minister said that a new ceiling in which the volume of production is 22.7 million b/d is a possible and practical ceiling. [passage omitted]

In reply to a question concerning the cost of repairing the damage inflicted by the Iraqi occupation forces on Kuwait's oil installations, the minister said that the process of estimating this is continuing. As for the cost of extinguishing the oil well fires and of constructing five collection centers, he said that the cost so far amounts to approximately $1.5 billion, and that this is only the beginning. [passage omitted]

As for selling oil, the oil minister said that Kuwait is not facing any problems marketing its oil and pointed out that Kuwait still has its old customers. He said that the repair and renovation process for oil installations is being carried out ahead of schedule. He pointed to the speed with which the oil well fires had been extinguished, and he added that by the end of June Kuwait's oil production will reach 900,000 b/d. [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia

Oil Minister Seeks Cut in International Production

LD1402201592 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 14 Feb 92

[Text] His Excellency Hisham Muhyi-al-Din Nazir, minister of petroleum and mineral resources, said that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is making every effort to reach an agreement on reducing oil production. He added that a reduction is in the interest of everybody and will help in stabilization, particularly during the second quarter of this year. He said that the Kingdom has done everything it can to reduce its production by 500,000 barrels a day within the framework of an agreement by all the OPEC member states.

The Kingdom believes that this contribution is sufficient to adjust the market position if OPEC's producer countries will reciprocate sufficiently to reach the desired ceiling. He said that producers outside OPEC should work together with the OPEC member states to balance supply and demand.

Saddam Inspects Rebuilding of Presidential Palace

JN1502155392 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1436 GMT 15 Feb 92

[Text] Baghdad, 15 Feb (INA)—President Saddam Husayn today inspected the rebuilding on some parts of the Presidential Palace, which was bombed by the scoundrel imperialist and Zionist aggressors.

His excellency took part in the reconstruction work being carried out by the zealous sons of his people, who got to work early this morning, hoping to build the lofty edifice of great Iraq in the march of struggle and construction, under the leadership of the nation's loyal son and carrier of the banner of faith, leader President Saddam Husayn, may God preserve him.

The workers and specialists rushed to work, each determined to register an honorable, distinguished position in the march of the new awakening in order to build the people's edifice, which will remain, with God's help, a thriving home for all honorable Iraqis and Arabs.

Meets DPK Political Bureau Member

JN1702155192 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1540 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Text] Baghdad, 17 Feb (INA)—President Saddam Husayn today conferred with Noshirevan Idris Barzani, member of the Political Bureau of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan [DPK].

Receives Cable of 'Love and Pride'

JN1502194992 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 15 Feb 92

["Text" of cable received by Saddam Husayn from the Political Bureau of the Kurdish Democratic Party, DPK—date not given]

[Text] Leader struggler President Saddam Husayn, may God preserve you: Greetings with love and pride. There is no doubt that the large conspiracy targeting great Iraq is evidence of the greatness of the march, which is being led by your excellency in this struggling country. No wonder your honorable person has been targeted, because they know well that you represent Iraq's greatness, its deep-rooted civilization, and its brilliant future.

Your absolute faith in God, the people, and principles are the solid rock that has crushed the enemies' plots and intrigues. Look, capable Iraq is rising proud and victorious to continue construction. Look, our people are celebrating the safety of the leader and the march to express our deep love for our leader and our pride in being part of this good march you are leading in Iraq.

Please accept this present, a personal picture of your excellency, beseeching Almighty God to safeguard you as an asset for our people and to preserve you lofty and strong like Kara Mountain.

O leader and symbol, our Kurdish people will certainly remain loyal to you and proud of all the achievements and gains they have made at your generous hands, pledge to defend the dear homeland, and will stand fast in the face of all the conspiracies targeting Iraq's safety, its people, and its civilization. O hero, may God preserve you for your people.

[Signed] The Political Bureau of the Kurdish Democratic Party

Opposition Conference Concludes in Washington

NC1602203092 (Clandestine) Voice of the Iraqi People in Arabic 1500 GMT 16 Feb 92

[Text] The world conference of the Iraq opposition ended in Washington yesterday with agreement on the need to unite and intensify efforts against the regime of the defeated tyrant, Saddam Husayn. The Iraqi opposition affirmed the need to isolate the defeated regime regionally and internationally as a principal move toward toppling him.

The final statement of the conference, called by the independent grouping in the United States and Canada, affirmed that the conferees, who represent both civilian and military opposition, have decided to set up a higher committee to support internal activity against Saddam Husayn's regime. They stressed the need to establish a regional and international front against the regime of the defeated tyrant.

Opposition Group Calls for 'Toppling Regime'

JN1302073292 Damascus AL-BA'TH in Arabic 31 Jan 92 p 1

[Text] Tehran—SANA correspondent—An Iraqi opposition organization called the National Leadership of the Ba'th Party in Iraq [al-qiyadah al-wataniyah li-hizb al-Ba'th fi al-'Iraq], has distributed a statement inside and outside Iraq calling for toppling the regime, establishing national rule in the country, and punishing all those who are proven to have committed crimes against the people and the homeland.

In its statement, the national leadership said it did not want to publicize itself, but found it necessary to inform the public, inside and outside, of the existence of an opposition organization inside Iraq despite all the repression.

SAIRI Claims Attacks on Government Forces

LD1202204692 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1930 GMT 12 Feb 92

[Text] The Iraqi popular forces attacked three Ba'th Party bases in Karbala', killing many of the Iraqi forces and inflicting a great deal of damage. The Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq [SAIRI] announced the news and added: Another attack by the

Iraqi popular forces on an Iraqi patrol on the al-Kut-Farmandari last week resulted in the destruction of that patrol, killing four members of the unit and wounding several others.

Regime Reportedly Removing Weapons From Baghdad

NC1402190192 (Clandestine) Voice of the Kurdistan Revolution Radio in Arabic 1525 GMT 14 Feb 92

[Text] The Iraqi authorities have removed weapons from barracks and camps inside the capital, keeping only some light weapons for sentry purposes.

Opposition sources, reporting from inside Baghdad, have said that the large and medium-caliber weapons are being gradually transported to camps outside the city, particularly to those in Tikrit. Correspondents interpret this measure as an attempt to prevent the Army from joining the people [words indistinct].

Commentary on Blockade, 'Suffering' of Kurds

JN1002123092 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1730 GMT 9 Feb 92

[Station commentary: "The Blockade and the Suffering of the Displaced People This Winter"]

[Text] Dear listener: Under the economic blockade imposed on Kurdistan during this cold and snowy winter, the suffering of citizens has increased. This suffering and the subsequent problems have left their mark on all aspects of life in Kurdistan. Basic commodities, particularly food, are sold at very high prices; that is, if they are found on the black market. Not all families, especially the poorer people, can buy these commodities. The fuel crisis is even worse. The problem of most people in Kurdistan is to find a gas cylinder or a few liters of fuel. If this is the situation of the people of Kurdistan, then what is the situation like for those who have been displaced from their houses and region and for those who left their money, wealth, land, store, and work? What must the suffering of the sons of Garmiyanah and Karkuk, for example, be like?

The suffering of our people is a humanitarian problem, because they are being deprived of the basic necessities of life. Earnest, sincere, and continuous work is therefore needed to save our people from starvation and the multifaceted blockade. This is the responsibility of the Iraqi Kurdistan Front and its institutions, given that the front today is the leader of our Kurdish people's struggle and liberation movement.

Brother struggler Mas'ud Barzani has affirmed that there is a need to draw a line between two issues. The first is the political issue; that is, the national Kurdish cause, which has yet to be solved. Today we are struggling to reach an honorable solution to this cause through peaceful means and dialogue. This is represented by the talks between the government and the Kurdistan Front. The obstacle of defining the border of the region has delayed the achievement of expected results, although the Kurdistan Front has exerted earnest efforts to overcome this obstacle. The second issue pertains to the citizens' ability to lead normal daily lives—with the return of service departments to carry out their normal tasks—in an atmosphere of security and stability and with the lifting of the economic blockade against Kurdistan.

It is everyone's duty to look at things impartially from a humanitarian and national angle, and out of concern for overcoming obstacles and pushing things toward a solution, and not in the opposite direction.

Barzani Discusses Siege, Negotiations

JN1702195392 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1751 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Report on speech by Mas'ud Barzani, leader of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan, at a graduation ceremony for "party cadres" on 15 February; place not given]

[Text] The ninth group of the institute of party cadres, which comprises 130 party cadres, graduated on Saturday, 15 February. Graduates will be appointed at the party's committees and organizations in all branches to perform their national and revolutionary duty.

Brother Mas'ud Barzani made a valuable speech at the ceremony, in which he stressed the importance of learning and valued the students' concern for studying. He also asked cadres to interact with the masses and to set an example for sacrifice.

The brother leader of the party also explained the party's constant peaceful approach, whether before or after the revolution on 11 September 1961. He added: We have an unchanging approach and a central slogan: Democracy for Iraq and true autonomy for Kurdistan. He went to say: We will cling to the peaceful approach to the end, whether today or in the future. If someone attacks us, however, we will defend ourselves.

Proceeding from the above, the brother leader of the party explained in detail the negotiations with the Iraqi Government that started with a decision by the Iraqi Kurdistan Front. He pointed out points of agreement and difference. He said: Had our demands been met, we would have signed the agreement without hesitation.

Replying to claims by some news agencies that negotiations have stopped, brother Mas'ud Barzani said that negotiations are still going on and have not stopped. We will not stop them unless the Iraqi Government does so, he said.

He added: I reiterate our concern for a peaceful resolution to the Kurdish issue, if the demands of the Kurdish people are met in a manner that satisfies their legitimate ambitions.

The brother leader of the party noted the great changes in the international arena and the prevalence of a humanitarian approach that calls for guaranteeing human rights and democracy, asserting the party's eagerness to maintain democracy.

He said the Kurdish people are eager to establish brotherly relations with other peoples, especially Arabs. Brother Mas'ud Barzani noted that resolving the Kurdish issue can be done by responding to Kurdish rights in the countries where Kurds live.

Brother Mas'ud Barzani also discussed the government's economic siege of Kurdistan, saying that the regime's justifications for the siege are not acceptable, whatever they may be.

He also noted that a party delegation is currently visiting Baghdad in hopes of lifting the siege. He said it will be difficult to resume negotiations if the siege is not lifted. The siege must be lifted, one way or another, he said.

The brother leader of the party noted the need for Kurdish self-reliance. At the conclusion of his speech, he said the Kurds will not be a bridge for others to cross over, nor will they be a pressuring card for others.

Turkey, Iran Reportedly Back Saddam's Overthrow

NC1102185192 (Clandestine) Voice of the Iraqi People in Arabic 1500 GMT 11 Feb 92

[Excerpts] Informed diplomatic sources in Washington have stated that Turkey has decided to support a U.S.-led plan to overthrow the despot Saddam Husayn. Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel, who is visiting Washington, is expected to convey Turkey's consent to U.S. President George Bush. Turkey's approval has come amid reports that Iran has also expressed its support in principle for efforts aimed at toppling the despotic regime. [passage omitted]

According to informed sources in Washington, Iran has given assurances that it will not oppose plans to overthrow Saddam Husayn. A friendly Arab state conveyed these assurances. Iran's approval is a result of an indirect dialogue between Tehran and Washington. [passage omitted]

Talks With Iran on MIA's, POW's Begin

JN1202211792 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2025 GMT 12 Feb 92

[Text] Geneva, 12 Feb (INA)—The first session of the joint Iraqi-Iranian technical committee to discuss the fate of those missing in action [MIA] during the Iraq-Iran war began this morning in Geneva, under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC].

The meeting, which is being held in the ICRC's headquarters, will discuss the fate of tens of thousands of registered and unregistered Iraqi prisoners that Iran is holding in violation of the Third Geneva Convention of 1949. The number of Iraqi prisoners and MIA's is estimated at 30,000.

The Iranian side had opposed any meeting of this committee. Through the insistence of the Iraqi side and the ICRC, however, the Iranian side was persuaded to attend the meeting.

In December 1991, Iran released 422 Iraqi prisoners of war and said this was the last batch of Iraqi prisoners who said they wished to go home, while the others have said they did not want to go back to Iraq.

The ICRC interpreted this Iranian statement as a violation of the 1949 Geneva conventions, which stressed that prisoners who do not wish to return to their country should state their position before the ICRC in a private meeting between the prisoner and the ICRC. This was not observed in the case of the Iraqi prisoners.

The Iraqi delegation to the meeting is headed by Dr. Akram al-Watri, head of the Foreign Ministry's Legal Department and chairman of the War Victims Standing Committee. The Iranian side is headed by Zahedi, head of the Foreign Affairs Department at the Iranian Foreign Ministry [name and title as received].

Al-Asad, Mubarak Criticized on Peace Talks

JN1302194792 Baghdad Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 13 Feb 92

[Text] Brothers: The Arab rulers who are eagerly running after the Bush administration after they have sold everything cheaply are seeking once again to give false hopes to the Arab nation and to make people constantly anticipate something coming out of nothing at all.

Those rulers, led by Husni Mubarak and Hafiz al-Asad, are telling people that it is possible to reach some solution with the Zionist entity to what they in the West call the Middle East problem, so as to avoid the mention of Palestine, although this is no more than an attempt to throw dust in the eyes.

On certain occasions we hear Husni speak about some hope that a miracle will happen to prevent the Zionist entity from building settlements, while at the same time the Bush administration announces that it will grant the Zionist enemy $10 billion in loan guarantees, and continues to condone the building of settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Hafiz al-Asad, on the other hand, meets daily with many people only to make disgusting and ridiculous utterances afterward. He claims he is seeking to establish a just, lasting peace in line with international resolutions, particularly Resolutions 242 and 338, as well as Resolution 425 on southern Lebanon. Despite this, Arab citizens have discovered that al-Asad, who opened the doors wide for the Madrid conference, went to Madrid without even receiving a promise that the Zionist entity would withdraw from the Golan, or that the United States

would pressure the Zionist enemy to please al-Asad, who stood in the same trench with the United States, Britain, France, and Shamir against Iraq.

Those traitors who are today dragging our homeland into the slaughterhouse are wagering on the Washington meetings and are playing their favorite game: I will go, I will not go, and finally shouting their famous cry: I will go, I will go, I will go.

Yemeni Education Minister Meets al-Zubaydi

JN0902120392 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1023 GMT 9 Feb 92

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 9 Feb (INA)—Prime Minister Muhammad Hamzah al-Zubaydi has stressed that the unique leadership of struggler President Saddam Husayn, and the Iraqi people's rallying around his wise leadership, have foiled the aggressive scheme targeted against Iraq's security and sovereignty.

While receiving Ahmad Salim al-Qadi, Yemeni minister of higher education and scientific research and his delegation here today, the prime minister said: The creative Iraqi mentality has produced a new form of jihad represented in the huge accomplishment of repairing what was destroyed by the unjust 30-state aggression in record time.

Muhammad Hamzah al-Zubaydi praised the honorable stance adopted by sisterly Yemen when Iraq confronted the unjust U.S.-Atlantic-Zionist aggression. He also underscored the historical bonds between the two sisterly peoples. [passage omitted]

Yemeni Labor Minister, Delegation Visit Baghdad

Meet Health Minister

JN1402122892 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1220 GMT 14 Feb 92

[Text] Baghdad, 14 Feb (INA)—Dr. Umid Midhat Mubarak, health minister and acting minister of labor and social affairs, today met with 'Abd-al-Rahman Salim Dhiban, Yemeni minister of labor and vocational education, and his accompanying delegation.

During the meeting, the minister hailed the Yemeni people's genuine stand in support of Iraq in its confrontation with the U.S.-Zionist-Atlantic aggression, which seeks to infringe on Iraq's dignity and sovereignty.

The two ministers discussed cooperation and coordination between their ministries and the exchange of expertise in the fields of labor and training.

'Abd-al-Rahman Salim Dhiban, Yemen's minister of labor and vocational education, arrived in Baghdad last night on a several-day visit to Iraq.

Confer With al-Zubaydi

JN1502192592 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1832 GMT 15 Feb 92

[Text] Baghdad, 15 Feb (INA)—Prime Minister Muhammad Hamzah al-Zubaydi received 'Abd-al-Rahman Salim Dhiban, Yemeni minister of labor and vocational education, and his delegation here today.

The prime minister highly praised Yemen's honorable position during Iraq's confrontation with the treacherous 30-state aggression. This, he added, epitomizes the sincere brotherly ties between the two countries.

Al-Zubaydi also reviewed the nature and dimensions of the tyrannical aggression against Iraq, as well as the damage caused by the continuation of the unjust economic blockade on Iraq.

The Yemeni minister of labor and vocational education praised the Iraqi people's heroic confrontation of the forces of aggression, as well as the achievements made by the zealous Iraqis in the epic Mother of Battles. He also stressed that the giant achievements in rebuilding what was destroyed by the aggression will remain a witness of the genuineness and greatness of the Iraqis and the sons of Mesopotamia. During the meeting, they discussed ways of promoting existing and future areas of cooperation between Iraq and Yemen.

The meeting was attended by the Yemeni ambassador to Baghdad.

Ramadan Views 'Hostile Designs'

JN1602174392 Baghdad INA in English 1605 GMT 16 Feb 92

[Text] Baghdad, Feb. 16, INA—Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan said Iraq is determined to confront hostile designs and threats and carry on the reconstruction of what was destroyed by the aggression.

Speaking during a meeting with visiting Yemeni labour minister, Mr. Ramadan expressed Iraq's keenness to boost relations of cooperation with sisterly Yemen in all fields.

The Yemeni minister expressed his country's desire to strengthen ties of cooperation with Iraq especially among organs of the ministries of labour.

Cooperation Agreement Signed

JN1702083692 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0744 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Text] Baghdad, 17 Feb (INA)—Iraq and Yemen today signed the minutes of an agreement for cooperation in the field of labor and vocational training.

The minutes, signed for Iraq by Dr. Umid Midhat Mubarak, minister of health and acting minister of labor and social affairs, and for Yemen by 'Abd-al-Rahman Dhiban, minister of labor and vocational education,

stipulated activating cooperation between the labor institutions in the two fraternal countries, and exchanging expertise in the field of vocational training and occupational safety.

Yemeni Minister Departs

JN1702130792 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1252 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Text] Baghdad, 17 Feb (INA)—'Abd-al-Rahman Salim Dhiban, Yemeni minister of labor and vocational education, left Baghdad today at the end of a several-day visit to Iraq.

During the visit, the Yemeni minister and his delegation held talks with a number of officials that dealt with relations between the two fraternal peoples, and means to develop them in the various fields.

Information Minister Meets Turkish Socialists

JN1102144692 Baghdad INA in English 1340 GMT 11 Feb 92

[Text] Baghdad, Feb. 11, INA—Minister of Information and Culture Hamid Yusuf Hammadi met the visiting Turkish Socialist Party delegation led by Ferit Ilsever.

During the meeting, the minister reviewed the dimensions of the U.S.-led aggression against Iraq and the extent of damage inflicted on civilians.

The Turkish party member expressed admiration for the successful Iraqi achievements and the reconstruction of what had been destroyed by the aggressors.

Ministry Official Assails Djerejian Remarks

JN1802114592 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1057 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Baghdad, 18 Feb (INA)—Nizar Hamdun, Foreign Ministry under secretary, has said that the statements made in Manama by Edward Djerejian, U.S. assistant secretary of state, confirm that the U.S. Administration has lost its balance as a result of the increasing questions being raised in the United States regarding the secrets behind Iraq's steadfastness in the face of an indescribable military aggression and an all-embracing economic blockade that has been continuing for the past 19 months.

In a statement to INA today, commenting on statements made by the U.S. assistant secretary of state during his Manama visit, Nizar Hamdun added that Djerejian's statement does not constitute a new U.S. position. Rather, he noted, it confirms the U.S. Administration's determination to persist with its familiar conduct regarding intervention in the domestic affairs of Iraq and a large number of other Arab states to promote U.S. interests at the expense of Arab interests, even if this were to destroy Arab interests.

He added: Djerejian should have realized that as a superpower in today's world, America and its administration's officials have a moral responsibility equal to the size of his country and its international role. This responsibility should at least respect the will of the people to choose their regime and way of life, and stop interfering in their internal affairs. This is in addition to the fact that his administration seeks to impose inhuman measures such as the economic blockade, which is based on the ill-conceived principle that "the end justifies the means," which basically means a premeditated endeavor to inflict direct harm on the interests and resources of millions of Iraqis by denying them access to the basic requirements of survival under unacceptable pretexts and excuses.

He stressed that what the U.S. Administration is propagating regarding the situation in Iraq and its future are mere delusions and figments of the imagination that only reflect the painful and abject failure of this administration's officials to achieve the failing objectives they have sought against Iraq and its leader. The relationship between Iraq and its leader, he noted, has never been as strong and cohesive as it is today. Besides, all chapters of the aggression and the blockade have only produced further cohesion and solidarity among the Iraqi people, not to mention enhancing faith in and allegiance to the leadership of the unique President Saddam Husayn.

U.S. 'Disinformation' on Gulf War Criticized

JN1302200992 Baghdad Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 13 Feb 92

[Text] In the treacherous 30-state attack against Iraq, the U.S. Administration made much of its so-called surgical war, in which it sought to appear careful not to hit civilians or civilian targets. To that end, it mounted a massive disinformation effort to deflect criticism of its crimes against women, children, and bed-ridden patients.

Observers outside Iraq must recall that the U.S. Administration omitted any mention of the civilians who perished on the bridge in al-Nasiriyah. The U.S. Administration saw fit, however, to report on an American flier who took care not to aim at a civilian on another Baghdad bridge. The Bush administration cannot possibly conceal its atrocities, which are coming to light with each passing day. Before long, the world will come to grasp the full extent of the devastation wrought by the treacherous 30-state aggression on civilian establishments and private homes, houses of worship, hospitals, and schools. At the height of the war, the U.S. Administration took pains to impose a news blackout on its atrocities.

A year ago today, 13 February, U.S. aircraft bombed the empty palace that was built to be a meeting place for conferences, and cultural and scientific events. Another strategic target for the Bush war was the al-'Amiriyah air raid shelter, where more than 750 women and children

took the brunt of the rockets of spiteful Bush in promoting his so-called victory. His Air Force pilots boasted about the daring they demonstrated against defenseless people and nursing infants that were consumed by fire. They flaunted their extermination of entire families and their tearing of children to pieces. Yet Cheney, Schwarzkopf, and Baker have the gall to plead for the crime of bombing the al-'Amiriyah shelter.

The al-'Amiriyah shelter atrocity is dramatic testimony to the outrage committed against the people of Iraq. That crime can hardly be expiated by protests of inaccurate or accidental bombing. The target must have been selected in advance, because the whole point of the Bush aggression was to decimate the children of Iraq. The sustained sanctions against the children and people of Iraq amount to a daily murders, and are, in effect, a sequel to the crime perpetrated by the American aircraft against the al-'Amiriyah shelter.

Iraq Policy With Linked to Bush Reelection

JN1402193192 Baghdad Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 14 Feb 92

[Text] President Bush has officially nominated himself for another term in office. Opinion polls show his popularity to be in steady decline, and, so, he will be fighting an uphill battle in seeking reelection. This is especially the case against the backdrop of unemployment and economic recession, and the fact that the American-Zionist-Atlantic aggression against Iraq failed to bring about the economic upturn promised by Bush as he sought to rally the Americans behind his Zionist-inspired aggression.

Moreover, Americans have been finding out about the lies fabricated by the administration of George Bush and his intelligence services to slander Iraq, including the the truth about the incubators affair. Far from doing some soul-searching to burnish his image with the American public, President Bush is running away from domestic woes to foreign concerns. The U.S. President seems to be fixated on Iraq. Which explains why his statements dwell on Iraq and its leader, seeking to justify his crimes and advance pretexts for meddling in Iraq's internal affairs and retaining the wrongful sanctions against women and children.

Deep down, Bush must know the outcome of the Mother of Battles, that he came out the loser rather than the winner he boasts he is; and that, far from being on top of things, he is indeed a beleaguered person. Bush must realize that Iraq—a small but tenacious third world nation—has earned the admiration of worthy and peace-loving people around the world. The U.S. President does not have much room to maneuver, and with his options narrowing, there is not much that he can do. Hence his opposition to the UN Security Council's summit addressing the sanctions against Iraq, and the council's subsequent passing, at the behest of the United States, of a resolution calling for retaining the sanctions. And hence the U.S. plans to interfere in Iraq's domestic affairs, his dispatch of his intelligence chief to the region in another of his desparate attempts, and the allocation of millions of dollars to the anti-Iraq political and propaganda effort. The incubators affair alone cost millions of dollars. We would ask: What new lies and scandals does Bush want to fund this time? All these attempts will prove of no avail to the U.S. President, and disgrace will stick to him even after he leaves the White House.

Ramadan Says U.S. Has Lost 'Balance'

JN1202212992 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 12 Feb 92

[Text] Taha Yasin Ramadan, member of the Revolution Command Council and vice president, has said that the eternal epic of the Mother of Battles has torn apart all the false slogans raised by the treasonous Arab rulers, slaves of the United States and its Zionist and Atlantic allies.

During a reception he accorded to the Syrian Arab poet Ahmad Sulayman Ahmad, Ramadan added: The escalation of the aggression against Iraq and the blockade imposed on its people confirms the aggressors' frustration and failure, as well as their indignation over the intensification of the march of reconstruction, and also over the strong support, which is translated into creative acts, for his excellency, leader President Saddam Husayn, the leader and symbol of Iraq.

The vice president noted that the U.S. Administration and its allies have lost their balance since their lies, as well as their hostile anti-Iraq policy, were exposed, and also after the world public became aware of the dimensions of the conspiracy and its hostile purposes.

For his part, Ahmad Sulayman Ahmad affirmed that the Arabs who have faith in their principles, sovereignty, and future all over the Arab world and elsewhere at this phase are more loyal to leader Saddam Husayn and supportive of his leadership and course than ever before, because this leadership will lead the Arabs to liberation, progress, and construction. He pointed out that the spirit of the Arab individual is growing stronger and becoming more determined to continue the struggle, and to liberate the Arab lands from the agent and treasonous rulers.

Calls For 'Revolutionary Methods'

JN1302182792 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 13 Feb 92

[Text] Taha Yasin Ramadan, vice president and member of the Revolution Command Council, has called for adopting revolutionary methods and formulas for the jihad and reconstruction which great Iraq is experiencing, because this constitutes a strong response and a practical challenge to all forms of U.S.-Zionist-reactionary conspiracies.

The call was made during Taha Yasin Ramadan's visit to al-Qadisiyah Governorate and his meeting with comrade

'Abd-al-Rahman Ahmad, member of the regional command and official in charge of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party's Central Euphrates Organization; Ahmad 'Abdallah Salih, al-Qadisiyah governor; the comrade secretaries and members of the al-Qadisiyah party branch; and heads of departments in the governorate.

The vice president noted that expanding services in the governorate can be achieved through field work and cooperation among all party and professional organizations and the sons of the governorate. He praised the achievements made so far as part of the reconstruction drive and the noble efforts made by officials and citizens to respond to the unjust 30-state aggression.

Al-Qadisiyah Governor Ahmad 'Abdallah Salih renewed, in the name of the sons of the governorate, the pledge to President Saddam Husayn to make more sacrifices to defend and rebuild great Iraq and oppose the forces of evil and aggression, whose fury and conspiracies increase whenever the sons of Iraq coalesce with each other and rally around their symbol and leader, President Saddam Husayn.

Al-Zubaydi Announces Reconstruction Programs

JN1202164892 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 12 Feb 92

[Text] Under instructions from his excellency, leader President Saddam Husayn, the implementation of a large number of service projects will soon begin in the al-Ta'mim Governorate at a cost of 14.893 million dinars.

This was announced by Prime Minister Muhammad Hamzah al-Zubaydi when he presided ove. an expanded meeting in the city of Karkuk. The meeting was attended by comrade Khadr 'Abd-al-'Aziz Husayn, Regional Command member and official in charge of the northern region organizations of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party; al-Ta'mim Governor Yasir Hasan Sultan; the comrade secretary of the al-Ta'mim party branch command; and heads of the central and branch departments in the governorate.

During the meeting, Muhammad Hamzah al-Zubaydi said: These projects, whose implementation in the al-Ta'mim Governorate was ordered by his excellency, leader President Saddam Husayn, are to meet the needs of the governorate and its residents, who enjoy the care of his excellency the president.

The prime minister added: One of these projects is the erection of Ghirnatah Bridge in the heart of Karkuk. This will be the fifth bridge in the city. It will cost 3.750 million dinars. These projects will also involve the building of two country roads in the Hawijah district, at a cost of 3.143 million dinars, out of 17 million dinars earmarked for building main roads throughout Iraq. In addition, 5 million dinars were allocated for the implementation of service projects in 10 new residential neighborhoods in the governorate's capital city. Also, 500,000 dinars were earmarked for maintaining the Karkuk slaughterhouse, while 1 million dinars were earmarked for supporting the Hawijah district municipality. Furthermore, 1.5 million dinars were allocated for maintaining the [word indistinct] heritage of Karkuk. He indicated that it is possible to consider the implementation of other projects in the governorate, including the completion of the consolidated Karkuk water project, with a capacity of 70 million gallons of potable water per day, as well as other projects for disposing of rainwater in the city of Karkuk.

The prime minister went on to say: These projects will be implemented through the Iraqis' determination, sacrifices, and jihad, which they demonstrated during the campaign for reconstructing and rebuilding what the aggressors and saboteurs destroyed. The destruction that they caused has exposed imperialism, Zionism, and their agents in the region. He affirmed that Karkuk is a city and a governorate cherished by all zealous patriots. It will remain, thanks to its population, a lofty Iraqi national edifice that defies all conspirators, and traitors, as well as those who trade with politics. He affirmed that the Iraqis—through their valor, sacrifices, and endeavors under the leadership of his excellency struggler President Saddam Husayn—are capable of crushing conspiracies and thwarting the schemes of evil criminals.

Muhammad Hamzah al-Zubaydah urged government employees to draw up their plans and programs, and to go about their work after ridding themselves of red tape and traditional work formulas to render the best possible services to citizens.

Paper Views Disclosures on Regional Weapons Sales

JN1802092992 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0720 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Baghdad, 18 Feb (INA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH says that hypocrisy, double standards, and cheap indecency have become the main traits of the U.S. policy.

In an article published today, the paper says that what Washington wants to achieve through "the new world order" is to see its interests rise above those of others and to see itself as the only party alive, even if this is at the expense of the future, stability, and security of the whole world.

The paper adds that there is abundant evidence to corroborate this. The paper notes, however, the information released by the Arms Control Association, a specialized U.S. organization, on 15 February provides additional evidence of how far the United States is willing to go in its failure to honor its pledges. The paper adds that this information also shows that the president of this "superpower" is a liar, whose actions are in complete harmony with those of his forefathers—the cowboys, highwaymen, and vagrants—who carried masks in their pockets for cheating purposes.

AL-THAWRAH says that Bush made a big fuss and clamor while calling for restraint in the sale of conventional weapons to the Third World in general, and the Middle East in particular, and forced his allies to comply with such a policy. Bush has, according to this Association, endorsed the shipment of $19 billion in U.S. weapons to the Middle East during the past 18 months, including $6 billion worth of arms to the Arab states, since he called for restraint in weapons sales alast May. Besides, the paper notes, the Association says that the United States concluded a deal with Saudi Arabia to sell it weapons worth $14 billion.

The paper asserts that Bush made a laughing stock of his allies and induced them to believe his insolent lie to promote the interests of U.S. arms monopolies after he had deluded them by professing to cherish a host of values.

AL-THAWRAH adds that not only is this a glaring manifestation of U.S. hypocrisy and double standards, it is also a deliberate and premeditated U.S. attempt to ruin the world.

Concluding its article, the paper says that Bush's call last May did not deceive us. However, the new disclosures provided the world with another opportunity to know the truth and act accordingly. Such opportunities, the paper affirms, do not often occur.

Memo to UN Protests U.S. Airspace 'Violations'

JN1402121692 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1035 GMT 14 Feb 92

[Text] New York, 14 Feb (INA)—U.S. aircraft have continued their violations of Iraqi airspace for purposes of provocation and surveillance.

In a memorandum to the UN secretary general in this regard, Iraq's permanent envoy to the United Nations has said that between 5-12 February, U.S. aircraft violated Iraqi airspace 93 times over Mosul, Irbil, Dahuk, Tall 'Afar, al-'Amadiyah, Rawandoz, Zakho, 'Ayn Zalah, and Sinjar at various altitudes and speeds. He also said that two U.S. F-111's flew over al-Faruq airfield on 11-12 February at a speed of 900 km per hour and an altitude of 1 km.

National Assembly Endorses 1993 Draft Budget

JN1302160592 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 13 Feb 91

[Text] Ending its fall term, the National Assembly held a session today under Speaker Sa'di Mahdi Salih, and hosted Finance Minister Majid 'Abd-Ja'far.

In this session, the assembly endorsed the draft state budget for 1993, which aims to provide the necessary funds to face the unjust blockade and rebuild public facilities and economic, social, and industrial structures that were destroyed during the 30-state aggression. The draft budget also aims to provide food supplies and health services, as well as other necessary materials, without stopping proce subsidies for these supplies to consolidate the steadfastness of the Iraqi people.

During the closing session, the speaker and members of the National Assembly repeated the oath of challenge that requires them to refrain from buying luxury items and clothing and making do with what they have for one year, as their contribution to facing the blockade.

During its fall term, which commenced on 2 November 1991, the assembly endorsed several draft laws and resolutions, primarily a draft law to award President Saddam Husayn the People's Medal in recognition of the leader president, the son of the people and the symbol of their dignity and pride, and his excellency's great struggling role in leading Iraq to a brighter future.

Red Crescent Chief Cited on Recent Tokyo Visit

JN1202142092 Baghdad INA in English 1340 GMT 12 Feb 92

[Text] Baghdad, Feb. 12, INA—The Japanese Socialist Party has expressed readiness to table the question of Iraqi frozen assets for debate at the next session of the Japanese parliament.

AL-'IRAQ newspaper of Baghdad said that this came up for discussion at a meeting held by Dr. Ibrahim al-Nuri, head of the Iraqi Red Crescent Society with the party leaders and the Japanese MPs [members of parliament] during his visit to Tokyo recently.

The Iraqi official said that he had expounded to Japanese party and parliament dignitaries dimensions of the economic sanctions on Iraq and the dangers of its perpetuation which had already caused the death of thousands of children and elderly.

IDF Tells Lebanese Army To Evacuate Positions

TA1802200492 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Excerpts] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] informed the Lebanese Army this evening that it should evacuate its positions in the vicinity of several Shiite villages in southern Lebanon by 0500 [0300 GMT] tomorrow morning. Dozens of katyushas were fired from these villages at northern Israel and the security zone. [passage omitted] Uri Lubrani, coordinator of government activities in Lebanon, said the following today:

[Begin recording] I have not heard earthshaking reactions from Syria after what happened to al-Musawi. I assume we will hear rhetoric, of course, but my impression—and I believe I know what I am talking about—is that large segments of the Shiite community, beyond as well as inside the security zone, viewed 'Abbas al-Musawi and the organization he represents as an organization that disrupts the peace process and that tries to incite Lebanese civilians to activities that will trigger an Israeli reaction. So, all in all, I believe that our action lets the instigators to hatred understand that they will not succeed, that we will strike at them, and that there is only one road: the one that leads to peace. [end recording] [passage omitted]

All Planes Return After Raid on Hizballah Target

TA1802201392 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2000 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Excerpt] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] spokesman has confirmed the report that Israeli Air Force planes attacked a Hizballah target in southern Lebanon this afternoon. Answering reporters' questions, the IDF spokesman said the planes had attacked a Hizballah target southeast of Jibshit and that the target had been hit. All our planes returned safely to base. [passage omitted]

Levi Criticizes Lebanese Support for Hizballah

TA1802210492 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 2030 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Foreign Minister David Levi has leveled strong criticism at the encouragement the Lebanese foreign minister has expressed for Hizballah. Minister Levi says that as far as Lebanon is concerned, this is tantamount to loss of reason as well as sovereignty. In a talk with our correspondent Qobi Mandel, the foreign minister added that Syria should declare, once and for all, whether it continues to give support for the terrorist organizations when it comes to talk peace with Israel.

Shamir: Katyusha Attacks 'Will Not Last Long'

TA1802135892 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1330 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir thinks the katyusha attacks on Israel will not last long. We will do everything we can to put an end to them, Shamir told our political correspondent Natan Gutman after meeting the prime minister of Iceland.

Reacting to the Palestinians' decision to delay their departure for the peace talks in Washington, Shamir said: I am sorry about anything delaying the talks, nobody would want that. Shamir pointed out that the arrest of two delegation members is part of reality. When people violate the law, the authorities reach conclusions, Shamir said.

Defense Minister on Continued Katyusha Attacks

TA1802162792 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Interview with Defense Minister Moshe Arens by Menahem Horowitz during the defense minister's tour of the northern border "at noon" on 18 Feb—recorded]

[Text] [Arens] I was happy to meet with leaders of the northern villages. This is a group of people with leadership ability, a high sense of responsibility, and courage. They represent a brave public that is experienced in periods of tension. Still, IDF [Israel Defense Forces] activity is not related to my meeting with them. The IDF will take the necessary action under the circumstances.

[Horowitz] Is it at all possible to prevent the firing of katyushas, which have a diameter of 122 mm and a range of over 20 km? Are we at all deployed to prevent the firing of such katyushas at Israel?

[Arens] Well, as you noted, these are 122-mm katyushas of two types: one with a range of 20 km and the other of about 10 km. Firing on our villages is more difficult now than 10 years ago thanks to the security zone. Such firing is not impossible, though, and our task is to make it so.

[Horowitz] They fire the katyushas from areas such as al-Nabatiyah, which are densely populated with Shiites, and this population does not prevent the firing. Reference here is to big missiles that require visible logistics.

[Arens] One need not have large-scale logistics to launch these missiles. I would still hope or expect the local population to prevent the firing. I would expect the Lebanese Army or Government to do so, but if they do not, it will be a little unpleasant in these areas.

Sharon Wants Wider Lebanese Security Zone

TA1902095792 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0930 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] Construction and Housing Minister Ari'el Sharon demanded that the inner cabinet hold a debate on whether the south Lebanese security zone should be expanded following the wave of katyusha attacks on Galilee settlements. Sharon told Menahem Horowitz, our correspondent in the north, that he had already proposed establishing a wider security zone in the past; however, his opinion had not been accepted.

Minister Sharon also asserted that since all Hizballah bases were situated in areas in the Lebanese al-Biqa' controlled by the Syrian Army, Israel should make Syria's continued participation in the peace talks conditional on the removal of terrorist bases from these areas.

Commentator Explains Policy of Controlled Fire

TA1902101692 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 19 Feb 92 pp A1, A10

[Commentary by Ze'ev Schiff: "Controlled Fire at the Outskirts of Villages"]

[Text] Israel does not want to exacerbate the tension in south Lebanon in any way, and its purpose is not to hit Lebanese people indiscriminately or force them to flee their homes. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] will be ordered to increase the intensity of its fire and aim it at additional targets only if the firing of katyushas and attacks on civilians continue. This is the gist of the policy enforced in the north in the wake of the killing of Hizballah leader Shaykh 'Abbas al-Musawi and the firing of katyushas at the Galilee.

Despite the katyusha attacks the IDF has so far refrained from firing indiscriminately at Lebanese villages. Reports about the number of shells fired by the IDF and the SLA [South Lebanese Army] have been grossly exaggerated. Were the figures correct and had the fire been directed at the heart of villages, dozens of civilians would probably have been killed. The impression is that the artillery fire is being directed at the outskirts of villages as a warning and only at those known for their relations with Hizballah.

Nevertheless, this is enough to sow panic among the residents. That is why SLA commander General Antoine Lahd chose to forewarn the inhabitants of three villages from which katyushas were fired to get out. Otherwise, he would have pounded them first with artillery fire, consequently forcing them to leave. It is assumed that only the civilian population can pressure Hizballah to stop its attacks. This method worked in the past, but due to Amal's current weakness it may not do the trick this time. If that is the case and if Hizballah continues its attacks, Israel will have no choice other than to expand the fire to additional targets and to be less choosy in their selection.

This controlled policy does not conflict with the attempt to hit Hizballah leaders who have been directly connected to attacks against Israel and the security zone. This explains not only the attack on Shaykh al-Musawi, but also the fire directed from a helicopter at the home of another high-ranking Hizballah functionary in south Lebanon yesterday. Among other things, these operations are designed to prove to Hizballah leaders that if they continue their attacks none of them will be immune to IDF retaliation.

This signal is of secondary importance because of their attitude toward prisoners of war and the statements issued in Beirut yesterday that Israeli navigator Ron Arad should be executed in the wake of al-Musawi's death.

The katyusha attacks on the Galilee have not changed the assessment that the killing of al-Musawi was a justified operation in the unrelenting war against Hizballah. The latter will clearly seek to avenge al-Musawi's death and may resort to diverse methods to that end, such as the suicide attacks it carried out in the past. Hizballah chose this war, and Israel is only responding. The attack on al-Musawi, who had been involved in Hizballah's operations in south Lebanon, is seen in this light. What complicates the situation is the fact that Syria indirectly abets the activities of Hizballah—which is backed, funded, and trained by the Iranians—and that the Lebanese Government is too weak to impose its will.

Reports on Katyusha-Artillery Exchanges

TA1802134792 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1330 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Excerpt] Another round of katyushas was fired at noon today at settlements on Israel's northern border, but there were no casualties. Our correspondent in the north, Menahem Horowitz reports:

Explosions were heard about two hours ago along the northern border. There were no casualties. Eyewitnesses said the rockets landed on the Lebanese side of the border. Artillery of the Israeli Army and the South Lebanese Army are continuing to pound terrorist targets outside the security zone. Many katyushas landed in the security zone in south Lebanon. Lebanese sources estimate that dozens of katyushas have been fired at Israel since the small hours of last night. Most of them exploded within Lebanese territory, near the border. [passage omitted]

No Damage in Further Attacks

TA1902053892 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Excerpts] Katyusha rockets were fired from Lebanon into the Galilee and the south Lebanese security zone this morning. No one was injured and no damage was caused. A number of katyusha rockets also were fired into the Galilee panhandle and the south Lebanese security zone close to midnight last night. In this incident also there were no injuries and no damage. [passage omitted]

The UNIFIL [UN Interim Force in Lebanon] command in south Lebanon reports that Israeli and South Lebanese Army artillery continued intermittent shelling of targets north of the zone last night. Israeli Air Force planes continued to fly over the area.

Another Attack Reported

TA1902104192 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1030 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] Several katyusha rockets landed in the Galilee panhandle a short while ago. Residents descended to their shelters and studies were stopped at schools. We are continuing to monitor developments.

Iran Held 'Solely Responsible' for Navigator

TA1902113292 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1005 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] Deputy Defense Minister 'Ovadya 'Eli today said that the Israeli Government calls for continued efforts to release our POW's and MIA's in Syria and Lebanon. 'Eli added that Israel holds the Iranian Government solely responsible for the safety, well-being, and health of captive navigator Ron Arad.

The deputy defense minister was responding to a motion to the agenda submitted by Likud Knesset Member Sara Doron. Our correspondent Ze'ev Kohen reports that the Knesset called on UN Secretary General Butrus Ghali to step up his predecessor's efforts to release the Israeli POW's and MIA's now that most of the Western hostages have been released with Israel's assistance.

'Reliable Israeli Sources' Cited

TA1802203992 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Interview with Tami Arad, wife of POW Ron Arad, by Ya'ir Stern in the United States on 18 February—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Arad] Ron was transferred to the Iranians two and a half years ago. He is held by the Iranians and they are responsible for his fate and safety. I hope and trust they will not hurt him. [passage omitted]

[Stern] Where do you draw your conclusion that he is held by the Iranians?

[Arad] I know this from reliable sources. I know from reliable Israeli sources that Ron was transferred to the Iranians two and a half years ago. Namely, he is not held by Hizballah or any other organization, the Organization of the Oppressed, or any other hitherto unknown organization. The Iranians are holding him, and I assume they will not give him up any too soon. They need him and so do we.

Wife Believes Airman Still Alive

TA1802172792 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Tami Arad, wife of Israeli navigator Ron Arad, stated this evening that she does not believe reports originating in Beirut that her husband has been murdered by his captors. Interviewed on CNN from Washington, Tami Arad said she is sure the Iranians have been holding Ron for a long time and they have not murdered him. The interview with Tami Arad came after a radio station in Beirut reported that Ron Arad may have been murdered by Hizballah to avenge Shaykh al-Musawi's death.

Security sources say Israel continues to regard Iran as being exclusively responsible for the well-being, health, and fate of Ron Arad.

Shamir Rejects U.S. on Self-Government Plan

TA1802180292 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1705 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir has rejected the U.S. Administration's demand that Israel present a plan for Palestinian self-government at once. He announced that Israel will present such a plan according to the progress made in the negotiations.

Foreign Minister David Levi expressed his confidence that the Palestinian delegation will ultimately report to the next round of talks in Washington. Our correspondent Ya'el Ayalon spoke with the two men after they had held separate meetings with the visiting prime minister of Iceland.

[Begin recording] [Ayalon] A few days before the beginning of the peace talks in Washington, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir firmly rejected the U.S. demand.

[Shamir] Nobody can demand anything from us; they can only make proposals or express wishes. Actually, our plan is to propose a peaceful solution to the problems involved in the conflict as the negotiations proceed.

[Ayalon] Referring to the arrest of two Palestinian activists, the prime minister said:

[Shamir] As for complaints about somebody who has been arrested, this is part of reality. When people are involved in violations of the law, the authorities reach conclusions. As far as I know, these men in question are not delegation members, but people who were assigned some administrative duties.

[Ayalon] Before hearing the news that the Palestinians will ultimately report to the peace talks, Foreign Minister David Levi lashed out at their decision to delay their departure for Washington.

[Levi] As far as the Palestinian delegation is concerned, one should always expect a replay of the same old game. Once they acted offended, another time they stayed out of the meeting hall, and on another occasion they sat in the corridor. Nevertheless, sobering up always followed such statements, and they ultimately returned to the negotiations.

[Ayalon] The minister was asked whether the deterioration of the situation in the north jeopardizes the peace

process. This presents a problem, Levi said, seeing that the enemies of peace are backed by our partners to the talks.

[Levi] By backing Hizballah, Syria shows that a big question mark hovers over its policy and declarations concerning peace.

[Ayalon] The two men held separate meetings today with the visiting prime minister of Iceland. [end recording]

Palestinians Seen Testing U.S. Immunity Pledge

TA1802205292 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] Palestinian sources say that this is not the first time that Palestinian delegation members have asked the Americans to grant immunity to people who were involved in hostilities and were subject to interrogation by the security forces. Thus, on the eve of the Washington conference, the delegation unsuccessfully attempted to transfer Maya Badran from Tulkarm to Jordan disguised as the delegation's photographer.

It seems that the delegation announced the suspension of its departure for Washington for two reasons: first, the delegation is trying to put the U.S. promises on diplomatic immunity to the test; second, the cooling of enthusiasm for the peace process in the Palestinian street. [passage omitted]

It is believed in Jerusalem that the Palestinian delegation will finally arrive in Washington next week. Our correspondent Yoram Ronen reports that it seems that next week's round of talks will be the last before elections in Israel. The Arab delegations want to stop the talks during the Ramadan fast in March, while the Israeli delegation wants them stopped during Passover [18-24 April] and Independence Day [7 May].

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir said today that the detention of the two Palestinians will not have an impact on the continuation of the talks. In his opinion, the next round of talks will be in the Middle East and not in Washington. Foreign Minister David Levi said that if the Palestinians decide to stay home, nobody will knock on their door and ask them to come to Washington.

Habash Said To Approve New Member in Delegation

TA1902093392 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 19 Feb 92 p 10

[Report by Yoram Binur, Sulayman al-Shafa'i, and news agencies]

[Excerpt] Despite the opposition of the PFLP [Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine] to the Palestinians' participation in the peace process, one of its activists has been included in the list of Palestinian delegates to the peace talks. He is Riyad Darduna, 21, an inhabitant of the Jabalyah refugee camp in the Gaza Strip, who has been held in administrative detention several times in the past. Last weekend he received a note from East Jerusalem informing him that he had been made a member of the delegation. The PFLP had in the past joined Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] in urging members of the Palestinian delegation to return from Madrid and Washington and to stay out of the negotiations. Arab sources in the Gaza Strip said the decision to include Darduna in the delegation was personally approved by George Habash. [passage omitted]

Reports on Continuing Cairo Espionage Affair

Detainees 'Not Suspected' of Spying

TA1602182492 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1800 GMT 16 Feb 92

[Text] The Israelis held in Egypt are not suspected of spying for Israel. Faris Misrati and his son have been charged with counterfeiting documents and with illegally staying in Egypt after their visas expired. Our political correspondent Arye Golan has learned that the two pleaded guilty. The nature of the charges against David Ovitz is unknown. He was interrogated about his ties with Faris Misrati.

Israeli Consul in Cairo Roni Porat today held a half-hour meeting with each of the three detainees, who told him that they were being treated well. Fa'iqa Misrati is held in a women's prison an hour's drive from Cairo, and the Israeli consul will see her tomorrow.

'Contradictory Reports' Received

TA1702172192 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1700 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Text] There are contradictory reports about the four Israelis detained in Egypt. A diplomat at the Israeli Embassy in Egypt told REUTER that the Egyptian authorities officially confirmed that the four are being interrogated on suspicion of spying for the Mosad. Jerusalem, on the other hand, says that only two of the detainees—Faris Misrati and his daughter Fa'iqa—are suspected of harming state security but not spying, and that the suspicions against the other two are unclear.

Official Notification of Espionage

TA1802083392 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 18 Feb 92 p A1

[Report by Eytan Rabin, Gay Bekhor, and Ron Kofman]

[Excerpt] Egypt has notified Israel officially that Faris Subhi Misrati, his son Majid, and daughter Fayiqah are suspected of "harming state security and falsifying documents." An Israeli diplomat at the Cairo embassy told reporters yesterday that the suspicion is "espionage for a foreign organization." According to the announcement, furniture dealer David Ovitz is being interrogated to determine his connection to the other detainees. In any event, the Egyptian missive, received in Jerusalem over the weekend, does not mention Israel or the Mosad.

The view in Israel is that an indictment against the Misrati family members will be filed soon and that, if they are found guilty, they can expect lengthy prison terms. According to them [not further specified], Egyptian top echelons, including President Husni Mubarak, have been following the affair closely.

Senior sources yesterday expressed the assessment that, in an attempt to locate the Egyptian men with whom Fayiqah Misrati had been in contact, the Egyptian security police deliberately spread the rumor about her having undergone a medical examination because of the suspicion that she has AIDS. Another view is that the rumor was spread by her father to prevent his daughter from being sexually abused in the Egyptian prison.

Although he was supposed to meet with Fayiqah Misrati yesterday, Israeli Consul in Cairo Roni Porat will see her only today. The reason given for this are technical difficulties regarding the timetable for the meeting because the prison is a two-hour drive from downtown Cairo. [passage omitted]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English at 0500 GMT on 18 February adds that "one of the questions which remains unanswered in the affair surrounds Majid Misrati's trip to Libya. Ron Ben-Yishay of YEDI'OT AHARONOT, covering the story in Egypt, says Misrati made the trip to visit relatives in his father's hometown. Ben-Yishay was speaking to reporter Dani Gur-Arye."]

Shamir: Construction in Town 'Will Not Stop'

TA1802174892 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir is today visiting Ma'ale Adumim, which was declared a town four months ago. Shamir says that construction in Ma'ale Adumim, as elsewhere in Israel, will not stop. Our correspondent Udi Segal is reporting from the broadcasting van at Ma'ale Adumim:

Good evening. It has been four months since Ma'ale Adumim was declared a town, the first town in the territories, and the occasion is being marked today. Prime Minister Shamir came here and toured the streets of the town, which is located in the Judaean hills east of Jerusalem. Thousands of apartments are under construction here, with the master plan being to expand in the direction of Jerusalem, thus creating a territorial continuity of Jewish settlement. It is hoped in Ma'ale Admumim that the number of residents will reach 20,000 within a year. We talked with Prime Minister Shamir after he received an explanation from the mayor about construction in this town.

[Begin recording] [Ma'ale Adumim Mayor 'Amos Startman] We are advancing in the direction of Jerusalem with our construction.

[Shamir] Only on the hilltops though, right?

[Startman] Yes, because the slopes are very steep and it is very difficult to build on them. Over the past year we have absorbed about 1,100 immigrants from Ethiopia, South America, France, and elsewhere.

[Segal] What about a cessation of construction and settlements? Reference here is to a first town in the territories—what does a cessation mean as far as you are concerned?

[Shamir] Look, I am confident that no cessation will be felt in Ma'ale Adumim or any other place in Israel.

[Segal] What is the meaning of the first town in Judaea and Samaria?

[Shamir] This is an extraordinary experience, as well as a privilege. There is no doubt that this town will be followed by others.

[Segal] Is there no connection between this and the peace process, the provocation which....

[Shamir, interrupting] There is no connection between this and the peace process. We are not opposed to the Arabs too building in these areas.

[Segal] Ma'ale Adumim was declared a town on 13 October in fact, a short while before the Madrid conference, after Interior Minister Arye Der'i and Major General Yatom, commander of the Central Command, so decided. Why was there a delay in marking this event? Mayor 'Amos Startman says the Ma'ale Adumim residents were asked to exercise a low profile.

[Startman] The delay was the result of a request by some government ministries, including the Prime Minister's Office, and the Defense and Interior Ministries, to postpone the celebration to prevent a possible provocation that could affect the peace talks in one way or another.

I believe that this occasion points to the strength of the place in terms of living standards and the level of education and services here. The meaning is not summed up in the number of residents only.

[Segal] Is the meaning also one of holding onto this land?

[Startman] No, this is irrelevant. We would have received the status of town sooner or later, since this is a technical and a purely legal act. [end recording]

On the occasion of the celebration in Ma'ale Adumim, the prime minister is at this moment becoming an honorary citizen of the town.

Arens Extends Settlers' Stay at Rehelim

TA1802113192 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 18 Feb 92 pp 1, 4

[Report by Avi Bnayahu]

[Text] Defense Minister Moshe Arens has recently secretly extended the presence of the settlers' protest vigil at the Rehelim site, near the Tapuah junction, by another month. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] authorities at the Central Command were notified recently of the defense minister's decision to extend the presence until 6 March. This follows the one-month extension previously approved by the defense minister.

The defense minister is preparing for the establishment of a new settlement at Rehelim, although this has not yet received the necessary government approval. 'AL HAMISHMAR has learned that in addition to the protest vigil at the site, the activity at the nearby Nahal Brigade outpost has for all intents and purposes turned into settlement activity. A Nahal Brigade company of the Betar youth movement has been stationed there.

The head of the Defense Ministry's Youth and Nahal Department has confirmed to 'AL HAMISHMAR that the Jewish Agency has been instructed to provide economic editlguidance to the Rehelim outpost.

Our military correspondent notes that contrary to the IDF spokesman's announcement that the site is a regular military outpost, presettlement activity is being carried out there toward the establishment of a new settlement at the site.

IDF Instates New Security Steps After Attack

TA1902055092 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] Major General Nehemya Tamari is expected to present his findings later today on Friday night's terror attack in northern Israel. New security arrangements go into effect today at IDF [Israel Defense Forces] bases throughout the country. Among the new orders are that all soldiers on guard duty will carry loaded guns. New recruits will guard in pairs, and soldiers on standby will wear uniform and boots and carry their weapons at all times. Soldiers at bases throughout the country will be briefed today on the new security arrangements.

Poll Shows Labor Under Rabin Would Best Likud

TA1802125192 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 18 Feb 92 p 6

[Report by Moshe Perl]

[Text] If Yitzhaq Rabin heads Labor, 32.5 percent of the electorate would vote for the party, while 28.5 percent would vote for the Likud. If Labor is led by Peres, however, it would win only 27 percent, while the Likud would be supported by 31.5 percent. This is the result of a public opinion poll conducted last week by Hanokh and Rafi Smith among the adult Jewish population. [no figures on number of interviewees as published] At the same time, the gap between Rabin and Peres among Labor voters has narrowed, although 50 percent support Rabin and 43 percent favor Peres.

The interviewees were asked: If Rabin heads Labor, for whom will you vote? The answers were: Labor—32.5 percent; Likud—28.5 percent; left—9.5 percent; right—8 percent; religious bloc—11 percent; others—0.5 percent; some 10 percent are yet undecided.

If Peres heads Labor, the voting breakdown will be as follows: Labor—27 percent; Likud—31.5 percent; left—10.5 percent; right—9 percent; religious bloc—12 percent; others—0.5 percent; 9.5 percent are undecided.

The poll further indicates that 51 percent of Labor voters believe it will win more support if headed by Yitzhaq Rabin, while 30 percent believe that Peres will score a greater victory. Only 9 percent believe that Labor stands a better chance if headed by Yisra'el Qeysar or Ora Namir, and 11 percent have no opinion on the issue.

Peres Polls Show Labor Fares Better Under Him

TA1702105592 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 17 Feb 92 p 9

[Report by Moshe Perl]

[Excerpt] Two days before the Labor party primaries, the war of polls between the two rival camps—both trying to communicate a sense of victory—has reached its peak. In the wake of polls flattering Yitzhaq Rabin, which have been published by numerous research institutes over the past months, Peres' election headquarters yesterday came out with data according to which: "Contrary to everything stated so far, it is with Shim'on Peres at the head of Labor that the party stands the best chance of winning the general elections."

Dr. Refa'ela Bilsky from Hebrew University in Jerusalem, a Peres headquarters activist, said yesterday that her findings prove that only with Shim'on Peres does Labor stand a real chance to win the elections. Bilsky's statement is based on the processed findings of polls conducted in the past few months by the Gutman Institute and the Panorama Institute. The polls had been commissioned by Peres headquarters. The processed findings show that if Peres leads Labor in the Knesset elections, the party will win 43.5 Knesset seats, but it will get only 34 seats if led by Rabin.

Bilsky added that Peres' obvious advantage is based on the support of immigrants, Arabs, and young first-time voters.

The statistical processing of the data shows that if the Labor is led by Peres, the party's hard-core voters will give it 32 Knesset seats, but only 29 if the party is led by Rabin. The gap begins to grow in Peres' favor as the above sectors are added: The immigrant votes will add two seats under Peres and only one seat under Rabin; the Arabs will increase the party's strength by five seats under Peres, but only a seat and a half under Rabin; first-time voters aged 18 to 21 will add four and a half Knesset seats if the party is led by Peres, and two and a half seats under Rabin. [passage omitted]

Israeli Detention of Palestinian Delegates Decried

JN1802123292 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Jordan today strongly denounced the Israeli occupation authorities' arrest of Jamal al-Shubaki and Muhammad Hurani, two members of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks.

Foreign Minister Kamil Abu-Jabir said that in addition to the repressive nature of this measure, Jordan, based on the fact that it provides an umbrella for the Palestinian delegation's participation in the peace process, views this measure as another Israeli attempt to obstruct the process and to create an atmosphere that would hamper its progress.

Delegates to Washington Listed; Two Replaced

JN1602090092 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 16 Feb 92 p 1

[Text] Amman—AL-RA'Y has learned that a slight change has been made to the Jordanian delegation to the bilateral peace negotiations.

The Jordanian delegation, headed by Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali, now comprises Staff Lieutenant General 'Abd-al-Hafiz Mar'i, Dr. Fayiz al-Tarawinah, Dr. Jawad al-'Anani, Ambassador Talal al-Hasan, Ambassador Nayif al-Qadi, Dr. Mundhir Haddadin, Legal Counselor 'Awn al-Khasawinah, Dr. 'Abdallah Tuqan, Dr. Ahmad Qatanani, Dr. Musa Burayzat, Dr. Muhammad Bani-Hani, Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir, and Engineer 'Asim Ghawshah.

It is worth noting that Anwar al-Khatib and Dr. Walid al-Khalidi have been replaced at their own request by Dr. Tuqan and Eng. Ghawshah.

Abu-Jabir Visits Syria To Coordinate on Talks

Views Peace Negotiations

JN1402170292 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 14 Feb 92

[Text] Within the framework of the consultations currently underway between the two fraternal countries to coordinate positions on political developments in the region, particularly the peace negotiations expected to be held in Washington on 24 February, Foreign Minister Kamil Abu-Jabir will begin an official visit to Syria tomorrow, during which he will meet with his Syrian counterpart Faruq al-Shar'.

In a statement to the JORDANIAN NEWS AGENCY-PETRA, the foreign minister emphasized that the Jordanian constants have been, and are still, based on the principles of international legitimacy and the Security Council resolutions pertaining to the Palestine question and the Arab-Israeli conflict, particularly Resolutions 242 and 338.

Dr. Abu-Jabir said that the Jordanian concept for the next round of Arab-Israeli peace negotiations is based on what was stressed by His Majesty King Husayn during a meeting he chaired for the Jordanian delegation to the peace negotiations yesterday, regarding emphasis on substance after discussing formalities and procedural issues in full during the two rounds of talks in Madrid and Washington.

The foreign minister said Jordanian-Palestinian coordination is continuing on all topics presented of the peace process and that the two sides are keen to continue this coordination in a manner that realizes the aspirations of the nation, and serves the higher national interests of the two fraternal peoples.

Departs for Damascus

JN1502091392 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 0900 GMT 15 Feb 92

[Text] The foreign minister, Dr. Kamil Abu-Jabir, left for Damascus this morning on a brief visit to the Syrian Arab Republic.

During the visit, Dr. Abu-Jabir will meet with Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' as part of the ongoing consultations between the two fraternal countries to coordinate positions vis-a-vis regional political developments, particularly the peace talks scheduled to be held in Washington on 24 February.

Returns After Talks With al-Shar'

JN1502184992 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 15 Feb 92

[Text] The foreign minister, Dr. Kamil Abu-Jabir, returned to Amman this evening after a short visit to Damascus. During the visit he held talks with Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'.

The talks dealt with the strong, fraternal, bilateral relations, in addition of the situation in the Arab region and developments of the peace process.

In a statement to Jordan television upon his return, Dr. Abu-Jabir said he and al-Shar' agreed to continue to organize consultations between the two countries. He added that he also agreed with his counterpart, the Syrian foreign minister, on the importance of conducting contacts at the Arab level in order to revive joint Arab action at this stage in which our nation faces very serious challenges in light of the continued Israeli extremist policies.

Abu-Jabir said his talks in Damascus were held in a positive and constructive atmosphere in which the spirit of frankness, understanding, and mutual respect for the two countries' positions prevailed.

Abu-Jabir and al-Shar' held talks in Damascus soon after foreign minister's arrival in the Syrian capital. The talks dealt with developments in the region, particularly the bilateral negotiations in Washington.

Paper Stresses 'Unity, Coordination'

JN1502162792 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 15 Feb 92 pp 1, 20

[Editorial: "Joint Goals Require a Unified Position"]

[Text] The intensive efforts currently underway to coordinate the positions of the Arab parties taking part in the Middle East peace process have a special importance, because they are being made during preparations for the fifth round of bilateral negotiations, which will resume in Washington on 24 February.

The new round of negotiations will deal with substantive topics related to the Arab-Israeli conflict, and it could be the decisive round of the whole peace process. Therefore, by going to the talks with a unified position and with a strategy that the Arab parties agree, on they may reach the desired results and prevent Israel from exploiting inter-Arab differences to abort the peace process and drive it off its right course to infertile dialectical and marginal issues.

It is natural that differences in views on certain aspects of the peace process occur, but the joint objectives of the Arab parties do not constitute points of disagreement or dispute, whether they be those related to the realization of a peaceful settlement based on the implementation of international legitimacy and the Security Council resolutions; or by eliminating the settlement policy and Israeli colonialist expansion in the occupied territories, ending the occupation, and restoring the Palestinian people's right to self-determination in their homeland.

These objectives, which stand as a joint goal among the Arab parties participating in the peace process, require enhanced coordination and open channels of communication. This will ensure that the parties enter the bilateral negotiations as one delegation and with one position, and offer joint views on how the negotiations should be and where they should lead.

Needless to say, since the start of the peace process, Jordan has been the party that is most eager to coordinate and unify positions and lay down a unified working strategy that enhances the Arab negotiating position to the level that is required by the nature of negotiations with Israel and its attempt to empty the peace process of its real content, and to turn it into a formal process that only serves Israeli objectives and greed.

Therefore, we look at Foreign Minister Kamil Abu-Jabir's visit to Damascus today as an advanced step on the road of active Jordanian efforts at unity and coordination, to build the proper framework for the Arab negotiating position with sisterly Syria in the face of obstacles to the peace process, and to agree on its avenues and the options that are supposed to be set up to advance this process.

His Majesty King Husayn emphasized, in his instructions to the Jordanian delegation last Thursday, the principles and constants of the Jordanian position, which are based on the need to concentrate on substantive issues and the implementation of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 as the practical mechanism for implementing international legitimacy and realizing the desired just and comprehensive peace.

We do not think that these principles differ from those of the Syrian, Lebanese, or the Palestinian positions. Therefore, we hope that the Jordanian-Syrian talks, which are being held within the framework of the current intensive efforts to prepare for the peace negotiations, will yield positive results that lead to a quadripartite meeting where all parties are unified around one position in the next round of negotiations, supported by an Arab stance that does not accept any Israeli attempt to circumvent the peace process or empty it of content and lead it away from its main objective, which is Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories and the realization of a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace in this afflicted region.

Editorial: United Position Possible

JN1602090492 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 16 Feb 92 pp 1, 14

[Editorial: "A New Stage for Successful Arab Coordination"]

[Text] The success of the foreign minister's visit to Syria and the agreement he reached with officials there on the need to continue bilateral coordination and comprehensive Arab coordination, indicate that reaching a united Arab position, based on the main principles whose bases are the resolutions of international legitimacy, is possible.

The success of the foreign minister's visit to sisterly Syria is of great importance, because it has come just before the convening of the new round of bilateral negotiations in Washington on 24 February.

It is expected that the next round of bilateral negotiations will be more serious and more decisive. Israeli settlement activities, withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories, and Palestinian self-rule during the transitional period will all be on the agenda of these negotiations, no matter how many maneuvers or prevarications Israel employs to avoid discussion of these primary issues. The subject of moving the negotiations from Washington to another country may be a point of sharp contention between the Arab parties and Israel, especially since U.S. Secretary of State James Baker announced the U.S. Administration's desire to move the negotiations, which shows that the U.S. Administration may bow to Israel's desire on this point.

Hence, Arab coordination has become an urgent Arab issue that is necessitated by the requisites of the Arab position at the negotiations.

Based on this understanding, Jordan seized the initiative by meeting with the Palestinian brothers in Amman, when His Majesty King Husayn and al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir received a PLO delegation to consolidate

bilateral coordination. Based on this understanding, the foreign minister visited sisterly Syria and met with fraternal officials there to strengthen the chains of Arab coordination.

Jordan is going ahead with its efforts to guarantee wider and more comprehensive Arab coordination. The success it has realized thus far is only the beginning of much broader and greater success.

Anyway, we hope that the Arabs' performance in the next round of bilateral negotiations will be more successful and more useful, thanks to the strong and integrated Arab coordination that gives priority to higher Arab interests and Arab rights.

Palestinian-Jordanian Talks Held in Amman

PLO Delegation Meets With Abu-Jabir

LD1602145192 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 13 Feb 92

[Text] A Palestinian-Jordanian meeting was held today at the Jordanian Foreign Ministry. Brothers Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh and Sulayman Al-Najjab, members of the PLO Executive Committee, met with the Jordanian foreign minister, Dr. Kamil Abu-Jabir. Brother al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, ambassador of the Palestinian State in Amman, and brother Akram Haniyah also attended the meeting.

The talks concentrated on the upcoming talks in Washington; the issue of the settlements; Israeli violations in the occupied territories; the significance of developing and consolidating Palestinian-Jordanian joint action; and relations between all the Arab parties, aimed at realizing Arab and Palestinian goals.

King Husayn Receives Delegation

JN1502163292 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 15 Feb 92

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn has received a PLO delegation at the Royal Hashemite Court. His majesty and the delegation exchanged views on the latest developments in the peace process and the next stage of the bilateral talks, to begin in Washington on 24 February.

The Palestinian delegation comprises Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, Yasir 'Amr, and Sulayman al-Najjab, PLO Executive Committee members; Akram Haniyah, Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat's adviser; and al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, Palestinian ambassador in Amman.

The meeting was attended by Royal Court Chief 'Adnan Abu-'Awdah.

'Abd-Rabbuh Comments on Talks

JN1502191292 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 15 Feb 92

[Dispatch by Salim 'Ali Diyab]

[Text] At the meeting between Prime Minister al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir and the Palestinian delegation, headed by Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, PLO Executive Committee member, also attended by 'Ali al-Suhaymat, deputy prime minister and transport minister, a review was made of the political developments related to the Middle East peace process and Jordanian-Palestinian coordination prior to the peace talks, scheduled to be held in Washington on 24 February.

The talks also dealt with the Arab position with a view to guaranteeing coordination among the Arab parties taking part in the peace process and achieving a united Arab stand on issues related to the peace process.

[Begin 'Abd-Rabbuh recording] We, the Jordanian and Palestinian sides, agree that the settlements issue has the priority and that the peace process will not advance unless the settlements drive in the occupied territories is completely halted, the actions of repression and terrorism and the daily violations are stopped, and the Fourth Geneva Convention concerning the occupied territories is implemented. We, Jordan and Palestine, seek Arab coordination meetings at all levels and seek a unified Arab position that supports this trend. As the Jordanian-Syrian talks are currently under way, Palestinian-Syrian talks will be held in the next two days. All this is to entrench our unified position at the Arab level, and then to go ahead strongly in the next negotiations. [end recording]

Delegation Meets Bin-Shakir

JN1502124592 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 15 Feb 92

[Text] Prime Minister al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir received the PLO delegation, headed by Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, PLO Executive Committee member, at his office today. 'Ali al-Suhaymat, deputy prime minister and transport minister, also attended.

A review was made of the developments related to the Middle East peace process within the framework of Jordanian-Palestinian coordination prior to the peace talks, scheduled to resume in Washington on 24 February.

The talks also discussed the Arab position, with a view to guarantee coordination among the Arab parties taking part in the peace process and achieve a united Arab stand on the issues related to the peace process.

The meeting was attended by PLO Executive Committee members Sulayman al-Najjab and Yasir 'Amr; Akram Haniyah, the Palestinian president's adviser for occupied land affairs; and al-Tayyib 'Abd- al-Rahim, Palestinian ambassador in Amman.

New Hizballah Head Calls U.S. 'Principal Enemy'

NC1902091292 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] Addressing the crowd yesterday at the funeral of 'Abbas al-Musawi, the slain Hizballah secretary general, Ayatollah Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah stressed that the Islamic resistance and the intifadah are the only two beacons taking action and offering martyrs, until the great dawn emerges and the situation arouses the feeling of all Muslims.

His eminence added: The messages between us and Israel are not new and are constant. Israel's messages take the shape of a raid or aggression and ours take the shape of an attacking resistance fighter. But it is not necessary to retaliate immediately because some messages take time to answer. We will not react but will act and plan for this action. [passage omitted]

On the settlement conference, Ayatollah Fadlallah said that the United States withdrew the word peace from the Madrid conference, which it had used as bait to involve Arabs in the negotiations. He added that the United States repeats what Shamir says but acts diplomatically. The United States sells us words while selling Israel advanced weapons.

His Eminence Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli then delivered a speech for the Hizballah command's leadership [passage omitted]

His eminence said: We tell the enemies that al-Musawi's blood will always be a beacon for mujahidin zeal, and a torch that lights the path of resistance. We also pledge to our people, the Islamic leadership, and all honorable men that we will remain a spear, pointed first at the Americans, and second at their protege Israel. We will continue to defend Islam indefinitely. We know that we will not triumph in one or even several years, but we are prepared for a battle of centuries and are up to this task, God willing. It is true that the equipment and material resources of the resistance cannot compete with the enemy's resources, but the will to resist cannot be overcome. [passage omitted]

His Eminence Hasan Nasrallah, Hizballah secretary general, delivered a speech for the Islamic resistance. He began by eulogizing the prince of the Islamic resistance martyrs. [passage omitted]

His eminence stressed that this barbarity is new proof of the enemy's racism, which we add to the series of other attacks. We hold first the United States and second Israel responsible for this massacre. We hold the United States responsible because it is Israel's master and protector. Everyone knows that Israel does not have the intrinsic capability to continue to exist, and it is there only because of U.S. support.

The Hizballah secretary general added: They wanted to defeat our will to resist by killing our secretary general. But his martyrdom will only increase our determination to confront them and fight. This popular presence is evidence of the level of harmony between the leadership and the masses. We bid farewell to our great martyr by pledging to continue the march.

Concluding his speech, the Hizballah secretary general set out the principles that govern the nature of the noble Islamic policy followed by the martyr leader, which the march will continue to pursue. He said:

[Begin recording] The United States will remain the principal enemy of the nation, and the great Satan. For us, Israel will remain a cancerous gland that has to be removed and a fabricated entity that must be uprooted, even if the whole world recognizes it. The guardian of Muslims, Ayatollah Khamene'i, will remain our leader; imam; master; and our strength in jihad, patience, and determination. The noble Islam of Muhammad will remain our ideology and religion and we will be led by it. We will remain proud of it, propagate it, and struggle for its sake. The Islamic resistance will remain our sole option, our constant reply, and the road we will never abandon. We will continue the battle even if some capitulate. Our oppressed people in Lebanon, whom our great martyr loved dearly, will remain in our hearts and consciences. We will work for this people and make sacrifices for the sake of its freedom, glory, and dignity; fulfilling its will; lifting the injustice and deprivation it is suffering from; and achieving the cherished real security and peace. Jerusalem will remain in our thoughts, the ultimate aim, the unlimited ambition, and a fiery sword that leads to the prophet's site of ascension. Palestine, all of Palestine, remains Palestine for this nation without conceding a single inch of its sacred soil. We will remain the jihad movement. [end recording]

[Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic at 1915 GMT on 18 February in a similar report adds: "Nasrallah, who said that Israel is digging its grave with its own hands, pledged to continue fighting until the Hebrew state is destroyed. He added that the language of war is the only one that exists between us."]

Shiite Organization Reportedly Executes Ron Arad

NC1802213792 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] A Shiite organization in Lebanon has announced that it executed Israeli Pilot Ron Arad today. The Israeli pilot has been held by the organization for several years.

A spokesman for the organization said the execution of the Israeli pilot comes in retaliation for the killing of Hizballah leader Shaykh 'Abbas al-Musawi the day before yesterday by Israeli aircraft.

It is worth noting that Lebanon's Hizballah today elected Shaykh Hasan Nasrallah as secretary general, to succeed Shaykh al-Musawi.

Cabinet Condemns Killing; Army Ordered To Remain

NC1802210092 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2015 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Statement by Information Minister Albert Mansur and remarks in response to unidentified reporters' questions following the cabinet meeting in Beirut on 18 February—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Mansur] The Council of Ministers discussed the Israeli threats and repeated attacks against south Lebanon, particularly the hideous crime committed by Israel of assassinating His Eminence Sayyid 'Abbas al-Musawi, Hizballah secretary general. The Council of Ministers condemned and denounced this hideous crime.

After discussion and debate, the Council of Ministers adopted the recommendations made by the Supreme National Defense Council. It requested his excellency the foreign minister to make the necessary diplomatic efforts to cope with all possible repercussions. The council will maintain an open session to deal with developments. [passage omitted]

[Question indistinct]

[Mansur] In accordance with the resolutions of the Council of Ministers, the foreign minister has been entrusted with the task of making all the necessary diplomatic contacts to deal with all possibilities. Several contacts will be made to cope with this situation.

[Question indistinct]

[Mansur] Of course. We not only advise the inhabitants, but also demand that they stay and hold on to their land.

[Unidentified reporter] Has Minister Buwayz briefed you on the outcome of his talks with the ambassadors of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council?

[Mansur] He certainly did. His excellency briefed us on his talks with the ambassadors of major states and the requests he made to them. They all asked for a chance to refer these requests to their governments.

[Question indistinct]

[Mansur] The reply comes through the use of all available means to defend the land and hold on to it in accordance with the Council of Ministers decision and the instructions given to the Army—the instructions the Army commander took earlier to stand fast and to hold on to the land and defend it with all possible means [words indistinct]. The Army command had ordered the Army to defend the land in the south and stay there. These instructions were later confirmed by the National Defense Council and today by the Council of Ministers.

British, French, U.S. Envoys Meet Shammas

NC1802154092 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1230 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Excerpts] Ambassador Suhayl Shammas, Foreign Ministry secretary general, today met with the ambassadors of the five permanent members of the Security Council to discuss the situation in the south in light of the recent Israeli attacks, and to support Lebanon's urgent complaint to the Security Council regarding the attacks. He met consecutively with the ambassadors of China, Russia, Britain, France, and the United States. [passage omitted]

British Ambassador David Tathan said the Foreign Ministry secretary general briefed him on the Lebanese Government's request for a Security Council meeting and asked for British support. Tathan added that he will immediately convey the Lebanese request for a Security Council meeting to his government.

French Ambassador Daniel Husson announced that his country supports Lebanon's request for a Security Council meeting and said that Lebanon may be sure of French support under all circumstances. He warned that the situation in the south is taking a dangerous turn and that the possibility of escalation does exist. He hoped that violence, which he described as unacceptable, will be curbed.

For his part, U.S. Ambassador Ryan Crocker said: Ambassador Shammas briefed me on Lebanon's decision to call a Security Council meeting and I will convey this to my government. He denounced the acts of violence in the south and urged all parties to exercise restraint. He refused to answer a question on whether his government will veto the Lebanese request.

At 1415 today, Shammas and Crocker went to the office of Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz, who met earlier with the German ambassador.

Defense Minister Departs for Damascus Talks

NC1802091792 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0900 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Defense Minister Michel al-Murr left for Damascus this morning at the head of a military delegation for talks with senior Syrian officials. The talks will deal with developments in the south, such as the Israeli attacks and murders.

Briefs al-Hirawi, Karami

NC1902083792 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] Michel al-Murr, deputy prime minister and defense minister, visited Damascus yesterday, leading a military delegation including Brigadier General Ibrahim 'Abbas, deputy chief of staff for operations; and Colonel Michel Rahbani, intelligence chief.

Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received them and they discussed military developments in south Lebanon.

General Mustafa Talas, Syrian deputy prime minister and defense minister, held a meeting attended by General 'Ali Aslan, deputy chief of staff, and high-ranking Syrian military officials.

General Talas described the talks as military-related.

Minister al-Murr said the visit was made, within the context of coordination between the two countries and in view of Syria's continuing support for Lebanon, to discuss current Lebanese issues.

Al-Murr and his delegation returned to Beirut yesterday, and al-Murr briefed President Ilyas al-Hirawi and Prime Minister 'Umar Karami on his Damascus talks.

Further Coverage on Continuing Clashes in South

Israeli Issues 'Ultimatum' to Villages

NC1802181192 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1645 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Excerpts] According to the latest reports from the south, severe tension prevails in various areas—particularly those adjacent to the security strip—amid reinforcements by both the Israeli and South Lebanese Armies.

Israeli helicopters are currently flying in heavy concentrations over townships north of the security strip. Israeli gunboats, meanwhile, are being monitored off the coast extending from Tyre to al-Zahrani.

The townships of Jba', Ayn Bu Siwar, and Jarju' in Iqlim al-Tuffah were shelled earlier today. Shell fire reached the townships of Bra'shit, Shaqra, and Yatar in the central sector of the security strip.

The town of Jibshit came under Israeli fire before 1600 today. Casualties and heavy material damage have been reported. The shelling of Jibshit hit several homes, including those of Nazih Sahaf and Salman Karim. Some of the shells which were fired on Jibshit did not explode.

The town of Zawtar also came under Israeli shell fire this afternoon. A rocket hit a home, and sniper fire was reported as well.

Correspondents have reported that the shelling of Jibshit wounded eight people, who were taken to al-Nabatiyah hospitals. In Zawtar, two persons were wounded, and another young man was wounded in Bra'shit. According to sources in the Amal Movement, one person was killed in Bra'shit. [passage omitted]

At 1400 today, a number of Katyushas were fired from Yatar and Shaqra toward northern Israel. [passage omitted]

Hizballah-Palestine announced in a statement that the Muhammad al-Jamal group of Hizballah-Palestine fired a number of Katyushas at military positions on the al-Khuraybah Hills near (Tall al-Nuhas) on the Lebanese-Israeli border. According to the statement, the target was the Israeli Army's military command post.

The statement added that the operation was in retaliation for repeated Israeli attacks against the Palestinian and Lebanese people in south Lebanon and in support of the Palestinian intifadah.

Israeli Chief of Staff Ehud Baraq has addressed an ultimatum over the Voice of Hope and Voice of the South radios to the inhabitants of Qabrikha, Yatar, Haris, and adjacent villages to evacuate their homes and villages by 0500 tomorrow.

'Mass Exodus' Follows

NC1802202792 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 2000 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent in Sidon reports that a mass exodus from the villages of Kafra, Yatar, Majdal Silm, and Qabrikha has followed the ultimatum issued by the agent Lahd militia and the occupation forces to the inhabitants to leave their villages before 0500 tomorrow.

Hizballah Claims Rocket Attacks

NC1802203692 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2015 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Hizballah has claimed responsibility for firing Katyushas against northern Israel, noting that this is not in retaliation for the assassination of Secretary General 'Abbas al-Musawi.

A source speaking on behalf of the party has affirmed that firing Katyushas against Upper Galilee and the security strip is aimed at silencing Israeli artillery. He added that the Islamic resistance has not yet avenged al-Musawi's assassination.

Israelis Set Up Roadblocks

NC1902072092 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] Zionist gunboats cruised along the Lebanese coast from Tyre to Khaldah and opened fire with machine guns on al-Rashidiyah camp.

Our correspondent in the south has reported that the Zionist occupation forces landed commandos last night on the coastal road of Sidon. The commandos set up a roadblock, stopped a number of vehicles for some time, and let them go after investigating them.

SLA Commander Warns Army

NC1902072592 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] Staff Major General Antoine Lahd, commander of the South Lebanese Army [SLA], has advised the

Lebanese Army not to open fire, so as not to get involved *and become a party to the clashes in the south.*

Army 'Will Continue To Respond'

NC1902080392 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] High-ranking Lebanese military sources have affirmed that the situation does not permit any hesitation while the Israeli occupier is shelling us from our own territory. The sources said that the Lebanese Army will continue to respond by all available means.

The sources ruled out the possibility of an Israeli invasion of the south and said that this will in no way benefit Israel, and the losses that could be expected would not benefit Yitzhaq Shamir or his election campaign.

The sources expect the current escalation to continue until the negotiations are held on 24 February. They said that the period from the end of this round to the Israeli elections in June will be a critical time fraught with danger. They added that Shamir will try to use Lebanon to gain points in the elections.

Rocket Attacks on Israel Continue

NC1902091392 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] Katyusha rocket fire resumed this morning on Galilee and the border strip.

The command of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon reported that Israeli and South Lebanese Army artillery answered the Katyusha attack.

Katyusha rockets were fired intermittently last night, forcing residents of north Israel to spend their third successive night in shelters.

An Israeli military spokesman in Jerusalem said that a number of rockets landed in Galilee, but caused no casualties or damage.

Israeli warplanes overflew al-Nabatiyah, Sidon, Tyre, the Palestinian camps, and Iqlim al-Tuffah last night. The Lebanese Army directed anti-aircraft gunfire at the Israeli planes, which staged mock raids.

Israeli Attack Feared

NC1902093492 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in English 0845 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] Tension prevails in south Lebanon in light of the continued exchange of shelling between the South Lebanese Army [SLA] and Israeli positions on one side, and the Muslim fundamentalist elements on the other.

Radio Free Lebanon's correspondent in the security zone said that several Katyusha rockets hit the zone and northern Israel at dawn today from the villages of Zibqin, Majdal Zun, and al-Ghanduriyah. He added that five others crashed into the Sidon area last night.

The French press agency AFP said that the villages of Bra'shit, Shaqra, Jarju', Mlita, 'Ayn Bu Siwar, Mlikh, al-Luwayzah, Zawtar, Jabal Safi, Majdal Silm, Jumayjimah, Jibshit, and Yatar came under heavy shelling from the SLA positions, which killed one person and injured 48 others.

Last night, Israeli warplanes launched false air raids on the camps of Sidon and Tyre as well as on the villages of Iqlim al-Tuffah.

The French agency quoted a Lebanese security source as expressing Lebanon's fear of a possible Israeli military operation aimed at capturing the Hizballah positions in Iqlim al-Tuffah. The source said that Israel mobilized troops and sent reinforcements to the frontlines of the villages of Mlita, Mlikh, and al-Luwayzah.

French Foreign Minister Dumas Concludes Visit

Speaks at News Conference

JN1402182692 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1740 GMT 14 Feb 92

[Text] Damascus, 14 Feb (SANA)—French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas stressed that Syria has an important role in the international arena and in the region. He said that his talks in Damascus were profound, cordial, and warm.

This came at a joint press conference Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas held today. It was attended by Arab and foreign news agency correspondents, television networks, journalists, and media men.

Mr. Dumas said that his visit to Damascus falls within the framework of promoting and expanding Syrian-French relations, which have witnessed a growing development since French President Francois Mitterrand's visit to Syria in 1984.

Dumas added: I was honored to hold a lengthy meeting with President al-Asad, during which he asked me to convey a cordial oral message to President Mitterrand, which I will convey as soon as I arrive in Paris.

Dumas clarified that his meetings with Syrian officials were profound and dealt with current international and regional issues. The talks focused mainly on developments in the peace process, the resumption of the talks in Washington on 24 February, and the prospects of resuming the Moscow negotiations at the end of April. He said during the visit that he understood Syria's position on these issues.

The French minister added that the talks also dealt with bilateral relations and means of promoting them, particularly cultural and economic relations, in addition to the situation in Lebanon. He stressed that there is a joint desire to see Lebanon enjoy its full sovereignty.

Dumas noted: During this visit, the two sides agreed to hold an active political dialogue similar to the dialogue which was held between us during this visit. He said: It would be appropriate to hold such meetings annually, one in Damascus and another in Paris.

The French minister said that he believed the coming months would witness development in relations between the two countries, and would take a new approach, with the objective of promoting and expanding them to the largest extent possible.

Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' spoke at the press conference. He said he was satisfied with the results of Roland Dumas' visit to Syria, and described the visit as more successful than some sides expected. He said that this visit contributed a great deal to improving the climate between the two countries.

Al-Shar' added: The talks between the Syrian and French dealt with issues of joint interest. He said: Views were identical on the overall results of these talks, which were permeated by a cordial atmosphere.

Al-Shar' emphasized that both sides focussed attention on bilateral relations. He said: We feel there is a joint desire to promote and expand cooperation between the two countries in the political, economic, and cultural fields.

Al-Shar' added: We have agreed to deal with any obstacles or difficulties that stand in the way of promoting bilateral relations. I believe that the coming months will witness a development of these relations and a new approach to promote them. I also think that we will find the appropriate solutions to any problems that might stand in the way of our economic relations.

Al-Shar' added that agreement was reached during the talks to expand cultural ties to the greatest degree possible, and that the embassies of the two countries will see to the development of these ties.

Al-Shar' went on to say that talks centered on the international situation and issues of mutual concern; as well as the peace process, its horizons, and the obstacles to establishing a just and comprehensive peace based on the resolutions of the United Nations and international legitimacy.

Al-Shar' further noted that the talks broached the situation in Lebanon in all its aspects, as well as other topics. Al-Shar' said: During the discussions, Syria emphasized the importance it attaches to a European, and in particular a French role in the ongoing peace process, and the importance of making this role more effective, especially in light of the obstacles being placed by the Israeli Government to make the peace process fail.

He added: We have agreed to meet periodically in Paris and Damascus. Also, other meetings could be held annually, as usually happens during the UN General Assembly meetings, al-Shar' said.

He asserted, moreover, that the visit was successful by all standards. He said: We hope that the visit will constitute a starting point toward important steps in Syrian-French relations. He also hoped that Syrian-French relations would receive fresh momentum during the coming years.

Asked about what France and the EC could do regarding Israel's continued policies, that reject peace in the region, Mr. Dumas said: France and its partners in the EC have stressed that any solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict must be legal and based on Security Council resolutions. It must also be fair, so as to take into consideration the rights of the Palestinian people, as these rights have been defined. In addition, the solution must be comprehensive; that is, the neighboring countries must participate in this process under fair conditions so as to bring about a withdrawal from the occupied territories. He added that France supports the peace

process, and that one of the conditions of this process is withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories. This also applies to the occupied Golan. Proceeding from this, the appropriate conditions should be made available so as to guarantee the effectiveness of the peace process.

Answering a question on relations between the two countries and the attitude of European nations toward Syria, Mr. Dumas said that France, as a member of the EC, has always considered and defended Syria's interests, and that it will continue to do so.

As for bilateral relations, he added that France has made pledges to improve relations with Syria and promote them to a better level.

Answering a question on the situation in Lebanon and the implementation of al-Ta'if agreement and Security Council Resolution 425, concerning Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon, Mr. Dumas said: France has supported the al-Ta'if agreement from the first day and it hopes to see it implemented. He added that France recognized the presidential elections in Lebanon, and received the Lebanese president in Paris as the president of Lebanon. He added: I said during my recent visit to Lebanon that France is willing to contribute to rebuilding this country. France also wishes to see Lebanon impose its authority over all its national soil; this means implementing Security Council Resolution 425.

Answering another question, the French minister said: If the current negotiations fail, there will be a new situation. Then, matters will require further discussions. He added: Syria has informed us that it reserves its right to adopt a different stance if the negotiations end in failure.

Answering a question on the possibility of Syria asking France to work to return the peace talks to the Security Council in case the stalemate in the talks and continued Israeli intransigence, al-Shar' said: Syria has always called for an international peace conference on the Middle East. It has also asserted more than once the role of Europe, the two cosponsors of the conference, and the United Nations.

The foreign minister added: Syria expressed this stance during the visits of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker to Damascus.

Al-Shar' also regretted that at a time when Syria was interested in a European role in the peace process, many European nations were not enthusiastic in supporting the Syrian viewpoint. He added: I would not be divulging a secret if I said that, in its reply to U.S. President George Bush's letter, Syria unequivocally asserted that if, in accordance with the U.S. initiative, the peace process did not lead to the implementation of Resolutions 242 and 338—that is, if the current peace process did not bring about a comprehensive Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories—then Syria and other Arab parties have the right to raise this issue once again at the Security Council. He added: We are not yet convinced that the United States, which is playing a role in the process, has proven its inability to bring about this settlement. We still expect the U.S. Administration to take the required stance to achieve a just, comprehensive peace in the region that is based on international legitimacy and UN resolutions.

Replying to another question, al-Shar' added: We realize that the peace process is long and arduous, and is faced with many obstacles owing to the fact that Israel does not want to see peace achieved in the region. This does not mean that we will let Israel use time to its own advantage so as to abort the peace process or create continuous obstacles to close the door of peace.

He added: I can say that large segments of world public opinion and many world officials have begun to realize that Israel does not want peace, and that it is the only party that is creating obstacles to a just and comprehensive peace. This means that Israel cannot continue to create obstacles forever because it has much to lose with world public opinion. This in itself represents some kind of restriction on the delay and procrastination practiced by Israel.

Departs Damascus

JN1402163792 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 14 Feb 92

[Text] French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas and his delegation left Damascus today following a three-day visit to Syria.

He was seen off at Damascus International Airport by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', senior Foreign Ministry officials, the Syrian ambassador to Paris, the French ambassador to Damascus, and the embassy staff.

Abu-Jabir Arrives for Coordination Talks

JN1502130892 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 15 Feb 92

[Text] Dr. Kamil Abu-Jabir, foreign minister of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, arrived today in Damascus on a visit to the Syrian Arab Republic. He was received by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', senior Foreign Ministry officials, the Syrian ambassador in Amman, and the Jordanian ambassador in Damascus accompanied by the embassy staff.

Dr. Abu-Jabir made a statement to a correspondent from the SYRIAN ARAB NEWS AGENCY, SANA, in which he praised Syria and its great stands on Arab issues. He said: The purpose of my visit to Damascus is to convey greetings from His Majesty King Husayn to President Hafiz al-Asad and the Syrian Government, and to discuss the current Arab position, developments on the Middle East arena, the peace talks, and bilateral ties with a view to draw a future strategy and find means for coordination and consultation between us.

Asked about Jordan's decision to attend the talks in Washington on 24 February, and the effect of this

decision on Arab coordination and solidarity, Dr. Abu-Jabir asserted that all Arab parties agree on all issues related to the peace talks.

Dr. Abu-Jabir was received upon his arrival at the Syrian-Jordanian border by Yusuf Shakkur, assistant foreign minister; Husayn Hassun, Dar'a governor; and Nayif al-Hadid, Jordanian ambassador in Damascus.

[Damascus SANA in Arabic at 1510 GMT on 15 February in a similar report adds: "Asked about Jordan's participation in Moscow conference and the nonparticipation of Syria, Lebanon, and the Palestinians, Dr. Abu-Jabir said: We value, appreciate, respect, and revere the Syrian position and understand it very well. There was discussion with Mr. Faruq al-Shar', which is still continuing. We seek the truth for the sake of the prospects of cooperation and coordination."]

Meets al-Shar'

JN1502164792 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 15 Feb 92

[Text] Damascus—A round of official talks was held at noon today between the Syrian delegation headed by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', and the Jordanian delegation headed by Foreign Minister Dr. Kamil Abu-Jabir. The talks were attended by Yusuf Shakkur, assistant foreign minister; Taha al-Khayrat, head of the Arab Homeland Department at the Foreign Ministry; Majid Abu-Salih, Syrian ambassador in Amman; Nayif al-Hadid, Jordanian ambassador in Damascus; and 'Abd-al-Ilah al-Khatib, director of the Jordanian foreign minister's office.

During the meeting, a general review was made of the previous phases of the peace process and the weak Arab coordination during these phases. The Jordanian foreign minister explained his country's position during these phases. For his part, Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' stressed, once again, the need for consultations and coordination during the next phases in order to achieve the objective of the peace process; namely, Israel's withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories and guaranteeing the Palestinian people's national legitimate rights on the basis of international legitimacy and the pertinent UN resolutions.

A review was also made of Israel's intransigent antipeace stands and its constant attempts to torpedo the peace process.

PLO Delegation Arrives To Coordinate Stance

JN1702200692 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1935 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Text] Mr. Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, arrived in Damascus today accompanied by a delegation. On hand to welcome him at Damascus International Airport were Mr. Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs, top Foreign Ministry officials, and the PLO representative in Damascus.

Mr. Qaddumi told a SANA reporter: When we come to Syria, it is as if we are coming back to our kinfolk, homeland, brothers, and family. He stressed the need for coordination on regional issues and developments, especially against the background of mounting Israeli attacks and Israeli intransigence, which is hampering the peace process. As an Arab family, we would do well to be prepared to defend ourselves and coordinate moves under fast changing circumstances and developments, Qaddumi added. He declared that it was natural that he should be in Damascus, and that he is not visiting Damascus as a stranger. He is on a homecoming mission to tighten ties among family members, and to build Arab solidarity in the wake of serious regional events. We and Damascus are keys to the advancement of noble Arab objectives, Qaddumi added.

Confers With al-Shar'

JN1802160292 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' received Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department this afternoon.

The meeting was attended by Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs; Assistant Foreign Minister Yusuf Shakkur; Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, Shafiq al-Hut, Sulayman al-Najjab, and Taysir Khalid, PLO Executive Committee members; and Mahmud al-Khalidi, the PLO representative in Damascus.

The meeting dealt with the situation in the region, the development of the peace process, and the continuous Israeli attempts to abort it.

The discussions also focussed on the repressive Israeli measures in the occupied Arab territories; its constant aggressions in Lebanon; and its state-sponsored terrorism, recently manifested in the Israeli aerial aggression that resulted in the killing of Shaykh 'Abbas al-Musawi and his family in south Lebanon.

It has been emphasized that the Israeli occupation of the Arab territories is one of the harshest forms of terrorism and is also a constant aggression, as viewed by international law, particularly UN General Assembly Resolution 3314, adopted in 1974.

It was agreed that the Arab parties raise these issues at the round of bilateral negotiations due to be held in Washington on 24 February.

Received by Khaddam

JN1802175392 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1720 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Damascus, 18 Feb (SANA)—At 1630 today, Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, and his delegation.

Discussions dealt with the latest developments in the Arab-Israeli conflict and the stages covered by the peace process.

Qaddumi Makes Statement, Departs

JN1902164392 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] Damascus—Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, left Damascus with his delegation this afternoon after a three-day visit to Syria.

He was seen off by Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs; high-ranking Foreign Ministry officials; and the director of the PLO Office in Damascus.

Prior to his departure, Qaddumi made a statement in which he said: It is natural for us to be here in Damascus with our brothers under these difficult circumstances. No doubt, the talks we held with Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' were discussions between brothers who share one cause, common objectives, and a joint struggle.

Qaddumi added: We have the same concept regarding the future and the developments in the Middle East, which oblige all of us on the Arab level to unite, and strengthen this coordination among Syria, the PLO, and the Arab countries.

Replying to a question on reports yesterday about the nonparticipation of the Palestinian delegation in the upcoming Washington talks, Qaddumi said: Perhaps there was a misunderstanding, because there was a political protest of Israel's detention of members of the Palestinian delegation. We wanted to tell the world that the continuation of such Israeli practices, particularly with regard to the Palestinian delegation, is categorically rejected. Such practices obstruct the peace march. However, we will continue with the peace march to prove to the world that Israel is the party that spikes the wheels of the peace process, the source of hardship in the region, and the hotbed of tension. These repeated attacks are evidence of this.

Replying to whether the Washington talks would lead to anything, such as halting settlements or anything else, Qaddumi answered: Israel and the Israeli Government, headed by the terrorist Shamir, cannot make advanced steps. We must prove to the world that we are the ones who want peace from a position of power and self-confidence, and that Israel has lost its nerve and is very worried because the world supports our cause and peaceful stances.

Information Minister on Peace Talks Stance

PM1402132692 London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic 14 Feb 92 p 42

[Interview with Information Minister Muhammad Salman by Usamah 'Ajjaj in Cairo; date not given]

[Excerpts] ['Ajjaj] Syrian policy vis-a-vis the Arab-Israeli conflict and eliminating the Israeli occupation of the Arab territories seems pessimistic on achieving any important results at any level. Why?

[Salman] Certainly, the principal fact governing the present situation is that Israel and all its measures—whether in the occupied Arab territories, or even what it proposed in the bilateral negotiations in Washington—do not inspire any optimism that peace can be achieved, or that these negotiations can achieve anything in the peace process. This is because it still continues its repressive policy; settlement building; and dispossession of Arab citizens in the Golan, southern Lebanon, the Gaza Strip, and the West Bank. The policy of repression throughout the occupied Arab territories has become a main characteristic and daily practice of the Israeli Government. This is why we do not believe, nor are we optimistic, that Israel could agree to withdraw from the Arab territories in compliance with international legitimacy and its resolutions, especially since we participated in the peace process on the basis of the implementation of Resolutions 242 and 338. Israel has not proved that it intends to implement the two resolutions or that it will adhere to international legitimacy. The latest thing which Israel rejected is the Security Council resolution, which condemned its expulsion of Arab citizens in Palestine from their homes and the dispossession of their families. [passage omitted]

['Ajjaj] In your view, what is the solution to the present crisis, in view of a U.S. role reflecting the desire not to put any pressure on Israel and the end of the Soviet Union?

[Salman] Actually there is a position which we want everyone to know. We know that the U.S. Administration is serious about achieving peace. But in order to achieve these serious moves it needs an initiative from Israel, in order to help the U.S. Administration—just as the Arabs have done—to realize positive steps in every stage of the negotiations. We Arabs also need a unified Arab position that would put pressure on Israel and thus coordinate with all world states, especially the permanent member states of the Security Council, which issued the resolutions calling for Israel's withdrawal from the Arab territories and rejected the seizure of territories by force, in accordance with Resolutions 242 and 338. If Israel feels that there is no international and Arab position pressuring it and forcing it to implement the two resolutions, it will not withdraw from the Arab territories and will not respect the Palestinian people's right to live on their own territory and within the boundaries of their independent state.

['Ajjaj] Do you believe that Syria's failure to participate in the multilateral negotiations in Moscow could have a negative effect on the course of the peace negotiations?

[Salman] From the outset, our belief has been that if no positive progress is made in the bilateral negotiations, nothing will be achieved in the multilateral negotiations.

Our participation in the multilateral negotiations would have meant relinquishing our rights and granting Israel new concessions, to the detriment of the Arabs and Arab history. We wonder: Why should we move toward discussing the secondary issues and move away from discussing the fundamental issues concerning the nature of the Arab-Israeli conflict? It is Tel Aviv which possesses nuclear weapons. Nobody seems to talk about that. The region must be looked at with the same criteria in order to achieve a comprehensive and just peace, so that the peoples of the region can live in security and stability. Is it reasonable, for example, for us to discuss issues such as economic cooperation, water, the environment, and arms control, without achieving something at the level of the main obstacle—that is, the need for Israel to withdraw from all the occupied territories?

['Ajjaj] How can the present crisis which the Arab world is experiencing be ended, following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait? And how can the negative effects of that crisis on the course of Arab action be overcome?

[Salman] Let us admit that Saddam Husayn's aggression and occupation of Kuwait created a rift in Arab ranks and caused confusion among Arabs in general and Gulf citizens in particular. But the swift initiative taken by some Arab states, embodied in the Damascus Declaration states, was designed to mend that rift and create a new atmosphere of optimism that the Arabs can rid themselves of the negative aspects caused by some abnormal actions. The declaration seeks to unite the Arab ranks and to make its states a nucleus for joint effective Arab action through the Arab League, which was prevented for a time by Saddam Husayn's occupation of Kuwait. The Damascus declaration laid the foundations for the nature of this action, and we hope that we will all work to establish a working program that will meet pan-Arab interests, for the Damascus declaration states and Arabs in general. [passage omitted]

Commentary: Syria Will 'Pave the Way' for Peace

JN1702154892 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Station commentary]

[Text] To further assert our position and desire to go the extra mile for peace, we announced yesterday our acceptance of the U.S. invitation to resume the peace talks in Washington on 24 February. We have also decided, after coordinating with our Arab brothers participating in the peace talks—given that we have always been eager to maintain such coordination and have called for it at all times—to head for Washington on the set date, in light of prior and recent assurances to which the United States has committed itself; namely, to serve as a catalyst for peace. We retain our full right, however, to clarify our viewpoint to the United States regarding the overall difficulties which are obstructing the peace process.

Today, Israel is creating obstacles, in word and deed, prior to the new round of talks, so as to sabotage the talks before they even start. We will, however, in word and deed, pave the way for the talks out of our conviction that anyone who truly desires peace must realize the requirements of peace and work to provide them. We will do that also out of our conviction that peace, which Israel views as a danger looming in its skies that would prevent it from practicing its sport of aggression and expansion, is, for us and the international community, a noble human objective of insurmountable importance, and a clear path to the progress and prosperity of mankind.

Perhaps we have always pointed out, through the lengthy dialogues at and away from the negotiating table, that our deep belief in peace, as a principle and form of conduct, does not commit us, in accordance with all laws and norms, to relinquish rights or territory and does not place us in the position of weak people who run after peace at any cost. This belief reveals to the entire world our reality, which the Zionist propaganda machine has worked to obliterate and falsify at all international forums, and indeed succeeded in leading these forums astray and blurring their vision.

Now, since positions are about to be—or have already—changed, and since the Israeli stance has been exposed and all people who hear discovered who the enemies and advocates of peace are, the world can sort out the facts of the long-standing Arab-Zionist conflict and see clearly how greatly it was deceived when it thought that Israel was a victim deserving of sympathy and assistance, and that what it is asking from the Arabs is only within the limits of peace.

Conclusive evidence has proven that Tel Aviv is asking everything from the Arabs except peace; and that it is asking the Arabs today, in broad daylight, to give it their territory, rights, destiny, and future, without any legal grounds, except for the 40-year-old mythical illusion by which it has deemed the Middle East a region for itself.

The next chance for the peace talks is international law, not Zionist illusion; it is also the touchstone that will show to all peace-loving forces in our world how they can serve peace and deliver the peace talks from their deadlock, by one way that cannot be ignored; namely, siding with fairness and nothing but fairness.

Commentary Urges Increased Arab Coordination

JN1602154892 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 16 Feb 92

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: We have consistently held that the peace talks will end the Arabs' way only through a solidly united Arab front, and that intra-Arab coordination every step of the way is the only option open to us if we are to be spared vulnerability to pressures. Intra-Arab coordination aimed at forging a united Arab posture can hardly be meaningful if it remains a slogan we raise every now and then, and if we fail to exert ourselves by putting

it into practice. Let us not fool ourselves or our nation by raising a hollow slogan, when our enemy strives to attain its iniquitous goals, and we fail to pursue our equitable objectives. As long the Arabs want the peace process to bring about an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories and recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian Arab people, as well as a fair and universal peace in the region, intra-Arab coordination had better be geared toward promoting this objective, irrespective of how the peace talks fare, and whatever the problems that may crop up, or the pressure that we may come under.

Along with all the Arabs, we have been aware since the outset that the road to peace is long and hard, and that such a complex and long-standing conflict as ours cannot possibly be worked out overnight. We have also been aware that time is on our side. So the bumpy road of peace talks need not lead us into making concessions under the pretext of accelerating and bailing out the peace process. Advancing the peace process is an international and regional responsibility that should be shared by all parties. Such a responsibility ought not to be borne exclusively the Arabs. It is inconceivable that the Arabs should be required to yield their land and rights—recognized by international law—just to promote the peace process.

If the rhetoric of Israeli officials since the peace conference kicked off is any guide, Israel's idea of peace is one that advances its interests and bellicose policies, as well as its expansionist and settlement agenda. Such a strategy makes Israel a major roadblock on the road to peace, and eventually exposes it to world public opinion and influential world powers as a menace to global peace, and a belligerent power that couldn't care less about international law or the will of the international community, which has been leaning toward the establishment of a just and extensive regional peace, underpinning a global peace inspired by the new world order. Under these circumstances, Arab coordination can go a long way toward driving Israel to the wall and getting it to accommodate the requirements of peace and justice. We would, therefore, do well to work toward forging a united Arab stand that should earn us the respect we deserve in the community of nations and emasculate Israel, which grows stronger every time a crack develops in the Arab edifice.

TISHRIN Editorial Stresses Coordination

JN1602101492 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0815 GMT 16 Feb 92

[Text] Damascus, 16 Feb (SANA)—The newspaper TISHRIN has reiterated the call for coordinating Arab positions and confronting intransigence and prevarication with a united Arab concept.

In its editorial today, the paper said the first and second round of Washington talks, as well as the talks in Moscow, exposed the reality of Israel's position, which exploited the weakness of Arab coordination and the absence of a united concept to speed up settlement building in the occupied Arab territories.

Regarding what it expects from the next set of talks, the paper stressed that the Israeli prime minister has asked his delegation to these talks to continue the same prevarication and stalling, and not to discuss the settlements, withdrawal, or Palestinian rights. It referred to what Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister's spokesman, has demanded concerning dividing the West Bank into four cantons under Israeli sovereignty.

The newspaper expressed the belief that negotiations in the next round, if they indeed take place, will be decisive because the situation requires that the Arabs insist on discussing the substantive issues and ways of implementing Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

The newspaper emphasized that Syrian, Jordanian, and Palestinian coordination is not only vital, it is of the utmost importance since the Israeli rulers are poised to abort the coming talks. It stressed the need to strengthen the Arab position and to let the international community face its responsibilities toward the Palestine question.

Commentary Assails Israeli 'Terrorist Policy'

JN1902162492 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1235 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: As it appears from its actions today, Israel wants the 24 February talks to be held in a very heated atmosphere under which it would be difficult for the participants to find the least common denominator through which they could push the peace process one step forward. Perhaps this does not surprise us, so long as Israel avoids peace in its entirety; and is relentlessly engrossed in charging the region's atmosphere with fiery statements and aggression exercises which recently reached a climax in the successive raids on southern Lebanon, and the assassination of Shaykh 'Abbas al-Musawi, his wife, his son, and his bodyguards. This comes at a time when Israel seeks to fan the fires of what it calls Arab terrorism, declaring its determination to explode this dud bomb in the Washington talks, and to preoccupy us and the entire world with fabricated sideline issues that have nothing to do with the peace process and are nonexistent.

In light of the scene which the region is experiencing today, we would like to ask all those who see and hear, and all those who seek the facts about the Middle East conflict: How can we describe the recent Israeli actions in southern Lebanon? What would be the form and definition of terrorism if these Zionist acts are not considered terrorism? Who really pursues a terrorist policy in the Middle East? Is it us or Israel?

The Tel Aviv government, as it presses ahead with its policy of terrorism in various forms and insists on accusing the Arabs of terrorism, assumes—so it seems—

that it is addressing an ignorant world. It asks the world to believe its clearest lies, support its ugliest crimes, and hate the Arabs amid the utmost injustice being dealt to them. In doing so, it relies on a history of deception and misleading, the umbrella which it spread through long decades and over big sectors of world public opinion, and with which it has poisoned brains and ideas, in order to complete the chain of the crime and realize its grave expansionist scheme with all the tools of aggression and terrorism it possesses.

Given the picture today, however, we do not believe that the haze that blurred the world's vision over the past years still exists. We believe that world public opinion can now clearly distinguish between the hangman and the victim, see the brutal and primitive nature of the Israeli action, and become biased toward justice in a conflict where the solution must be based on justice.

The scene of the conflict is now narrowing as the Israeli hatred escalates and Israel's intransigent and diehard position increases. The Arabs, on the other hand, sincerely seek to facilitate the chances for peace, and attain a just and comprehensive solution. Is it time for the owners of the peace initiative, the sponsors of the peace conference and those who are committed, to be a driving force in the various stages of the peace process? Is it time for them to prove that they can direct the dangerous course the peace process has taken toward the purpose for which it is being held? This question does not have much time to wait for an answer. Nor can it tolerate waiting.

Newspapers Cited on Israeli Raids, Peace Process

JN1902083292 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0535 GMT 19 Feb 92

[From the press review]

[Text] AL-THAWRAH discusses Israeli attacks on southern Lebanon, saying: Nobody doubts that the series of bloody, violent acts and cowardly, deliberate killings begun by Israel, and extended to include Lebanon after the occupied territories—the world witnessed some of the tragic episodes of this violence two days ago—has once again put peace in this region into peril and faced the peace process and the fourth round of the Washington talks with the possibility of failure and collapse.

AL-THAWRAH stresses that Israel's crime of assassinating Shaykh 'Abbas al-Musawi, his wife and child, and escorts, as well as the series of barbaric organized raids on southern Lebanon, must not go unpunished.

AL-THAWRAH concludes: Israel and its belligerent, terrorist, and extremist butchers are mistaken—in fact they will be under a great delusion—if they think that reckless, blind, bloody terrorism can render us helpless, weaken us or kill our spirit of resistance. We will always kindle the torch of resistance by continuing to struggle and pursue the march of sacrifices, considering the sacrifice of blood and martyrdom a cheap price to pay in order to repulse injustice and deter aggression.

Qaddur Denies Soviet Nuclear Scientists Recruited

JN1502160492 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 12 Feb 92 pp 1, 21

[Text] Cairo—Nasir Qaddur, Syrian minister of state for foreign affairs, has stated that the Western media campaign concerning fears that Russian nuclear scientists may move to the Arab states seeks to keep Israel the only nuclear power in the region.

In a statement to an AL-ITTIHAD correspondent in Cairo following his participation in the Syrian-Egyptian committee meetings, Qaddur said that Syria has not thus far attempted to recruit nuclear scientists from the Commonwealth states. He pointed out that it is no longer a secret that Israel has now for years possessed nuclear weapons and that it seeks to disarm the Arabs so that it will end up the only dominant power in the region.

The Syrian minister cited the media campaign concerning the shipping of Czech tanks to Syria. He said the deal is an old one and that Israel has known objectives—namely, to be the only power dominating the region. Despite this, he added, Germany, which held the freighter carrying the tanks to Syria, has emphasized that it does not intend to keep the weapons. He said that Germany pointed out that the matter does not directly concern Syria, but the freighter violated German law because it should have had prior approval to ship these weapons. He added that there will be a reasonable solution to this issue.

As for the recent visit by Hans Blix, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, to Syria, the Syrian minister said that his country is party to the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and that it pointed out to the international official that Israel posseses nuclear weapons. He also said that Blix was further told that Syria will not employ nuclear energy for military purposes but rather for peaceful purposes to develop agriculture, industry, and research, and for other purely scientific purposes.

He said that his country requests that Israel sign the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and calls for declaring the Middle East a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons.

Bangladesh

More Burmese Refugees Arrive; Agencies Pledge Aid

BK1502030692 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 0130 GMT 15 feb 92

[Text] Another three camps for the Rohingya refugees have been opened by the district administration of Banderban and Cox's Bazaar. Two of them are in (Kutabalang) and (Marichapalong) of Ukhia upazilla [subdistrict], while the other one is in (Naichanchari) of Bandarban District. BSS [BANGLADESH SANGBAD SANGSTHA] quoting official sources say about 5,000 Rohingyas crossed into Bangladesh through frontier points of Bandarban and Cox's Bazaar districts during the last three days. Most of them are children and women. The concerned district administration is (?compelled) to provide them with relief materials. Besides, Bangladesh Red Crescent Society also distributed rice, pulses, and other foodstuff among them.

Dhaka Appeals for Emergency Relief

BK1502161492 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 15 Feb 92

[Text] Bangladesh has appealed to the United Nations and the international community for emergency relief to support the Rohingya [Burmese Muslim] refugees. It has urged the UN secretary general, Dr. Butrus Ghali, to provide food, shelter and medicare to the refugees on humanitarian grounds and exercise his good offices for their repatriation.

Responding to Bangladesh's call, UN High Commissioner for Refugees Sadako Ogata has already (?released) $100,000 from her emergency fund to meet the immediate requirements of the refugees. A high-level mission of the UN High Commission for Refugees [UNHCR] arrives in Dhaka tomorrow to draw up a comprehensive assistance program for the Myanmar [Burma] Muslim refugees. A two-member advance team of the UNHCR has already arrived in Bangladesh. The team has now gone to Cox's Bazar to see for itself the condition of refugees.

UNHCR Promises $1 Million

BK1702130292 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1230 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Text] Bangladesh has received an assurance of a further U.S. $1 million assistance from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNHCR, for the Burmese Muslims sheltered in the country. A Foreign Office spokesman said in Dhaka Monday [17 February] that the international community has responded positively to the country's appeal for emergency assistance to the Burmese refugees.

Promptly responding to Bangladesh's call, the UNHCR earlier released a fund of U.S. $100,000 to meet immediate requirement of the refugees. The spokesman said the number of refugees is increasing everyday as the inflow of the Rohingya Muslims from the Arakans province of Burma into Bangladesh continued. An estimated 50,000 Muslims fled Burma to Bangladesh to escape the social, political, and racial persecution unleashed on them by the Myanmar [Burma] military regime. Replying to a question, the spokesman said that Bangladesh has kept open dialogue with Burma to bring about a peaceful settlement of the problem.

3-Day Indian Border Talks Conclude

BK1502021492 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 0130 GMT 15 Feb 92

[Text] The modalities for implementation of the agreement between Bangladesh and India for leasing out the Tin Bigha corridor will be finalized in the next round of talks in New Delhi as soon as possible. This was decided at the talks between high officials of the two countries which ended in Dhaka yesterday.

A foreign office spokesman said the three-day talks were held according to the agreement between Bangladesh and India on demarcation of the land boundary and related matters.

Talks Termed 'Constructive'

BK1502131292 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh External Service in English 1230 GMT 15 Feb 92

[Text] The Bangladeshi minister for agriculture, water development and flood control, Majidul Haq, called on the Indian Minister for External Affairs Madhavsinh Solanki in New Delhi Friday [14 February]. They had a very constructive exchange of views on various issues of India-Bangladesh bilateral relations, particularly on Tin Bigha, Chakma refugees, and economic cooperation. The agriculture minister informed that with the advent of a democratic government in Bangladesh, it is expected that India-Bangladesh relations will move forward in a positive manner. Bangladesh and India will be in an excellent position to reap the benefit of cooperation in cultural and economic fields for mutual benefit. On the water sharing issue, he had stressed Bangladesh's perspective on the urgency for a sharing agreement and requested India's understanding. Mr. Solanki underlined India's interest for creating a positive momentum in India-Bangladesh relations and said that the present government was earnestly working toward that goal.

Cooperation Protocol Signed With Turkey

BK1702164092 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Text] Bangladesh and Turkey signed their second protocol on conclusion of the three-day session of the joint commission in Dhaka today. The protocol envisages furthering bilateral relations in the fields of economy, trade, technical and cultural cooperation. Turkish

deputy under secretary for foreign trade (Sebket Ozdedin) and ERD [External Resources Department] additional secretary, Dr. Shaukat Ali, signed the protocol on behalf of their governments. A project document was also signed under which Bangladesh will get about 5 crore taka from Turkey for establishing Kemal Ataturk Hall in Shah Jalal University.

India

Delhi Ready To Counter Pakistani 'Misadventure'

BK1902082792 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] The defense minister, Mr. Sharad Pawar, has said that India does not want to go nuclear but is fully prepared to counter any misadventure from Islamabad. Talking to newsmen in Parwanu in Himachal Pradesh yesterday, Mr. Pawar accused some countries of internationalizing the Kashmir issue. He disclosed that he would visit Moscow and Washington next month to further strengthen mutual ties with these countries.

Editorial Notes Drop in U.S. Aid to Pakistan

BK1902023392 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 3 Feb 92 p 8

[Editorial: "Changing Equations"]

[Text] The United States' $22 billion foreign affairs budget for fiscal 1993, which does not earmark any assistance, economic or military, to Pakistan differs from the ones for 1991 and 1992 which did. Though assistance was ultimately withheld in both these years in the absence of a presidential certification—required under the Pressler amendment—that Pakistan did not possess a nuclear device, the difference is important and indicates s clear hardening of the US attitude to Pakistan. The point is further underlined by the freezing of assistance to the tune of $ 500 million in the pipeline and the provision of only $50 million in the form of humanitarian aid.

The staunching of aid is the direct result of Pakistan's continued pursuit of a military nuclear programme—unlike India which has made absolutely clear that it has no such intention. Other factors, however, have also contributed to the chill in Washington's relations with Islamabad. One of these is clearly the persistent attempt by a section in Pakistan's military establishment to sabotage efforts toward a political settlement in Afghanistan favoured both by Washington and Moscow, and encourage the Afghan Mojahedin leader, Mr Golboddin Hekmatyar, to strive for a set-up dominated by his hardline followers. Though Lt-Gen. Hamid Gul, whose hawkish position on Afghanistan had clearly led to his transfer from the Inter-Services Intelligence, which he headed, to the strike corps at Multan as commander, has been prematurely retired, there is obviously no dearth of officers who feel like him. Besides, the US could not have viewed with equanimity the involvement of a section of the Pakistani military establishment in the drug trade, and the pro-Iraq sentiments which waxed strong in Pakistan's military establishment during the Gulf war. Nor could it have remained indifferent to Pakistan's deep and growing ties with the forces of Islamic fundamentalism increasingly assertive in the world and inimical to the cultural plurality which must be the basis of any democratic order.

In sharp contrast, there has been a marked improvement in Indo-US relations. This has been the result of a number of factors—the growing tendency of the US to distance itself from Pakistan; the end of the cold war and the collapse of the Soviet Union which has removed scope for irritation on the issue of India's attitude towards Moscow vis-a-vis Washington; the increasing realism—reflected in its recent recognition of Israel—in New Delhi's post-cold war foreign policy; and India's economic liberalisation. Besides, while India needs aid and investment to tide over its economic difficulties, the US, rebuffed by Japan and frequently cold-shouldered by the European countries, needs new friends. Objective conditions therefore have never been more conducive for the world's largest and most powerful democracies to come closer. Much, however, will depend on how the two conduct themselves, and particularly the sensitivity the US shows towards India's problem of transition to a less regulated economy and determination to traverse its own path to liberalisation and not allow any infringement of its national sovereigntly.

Kashmir Militants Free Kidnapped Defense Official

BK1802162092 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, the state government employees have called off their 43-day-old strike. This follows an agreement between the state government and representatives of employees on their demands. According to the agreement, the state government employees will get central pay-scales from April 1990. However, the 1st of April 1987 will be treated as a cutoff year for the purpose of pay fixation in the revised scales.

In the Kashmir valley, militants today set free the director of defense labor procurement, Mr. Bashir Ahmed Shah, who was kidnapped from his Srinagar office about two weeks ago.

Pawar—Border Violations To Be Handled 'Sternly'

BK1702031092 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Text] The defense minister, Mr. Sharad Pawar, has said that any violation of the Line of Control in Kashmir will be dealt with sternly. Speaking to newspersons near Pune yesterday, Mr. Pawar said if the leader of the so-called JKLF [Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front], Mr. Amanullah Khan, intrudes into Kashmir, he will not be spared as he is wanted in at least six cases of murder.

The defense minister said he will explore financial tie ups for funding the Light Combat Aircraft project during his forthcoming visit to the United States and European countries.

Punjab Elections Begin Under Tight Security

BK1902033692 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] In Punjab, polling for 115 assembly and 13 Lok Sabha seats began at 0700 [0130 GMT] this morning. Polling will continue up to 1600 in the evening. Over 1.32 crore voters are eligible to exercise their franchise. There are 81 candidates in the fray for Lok Sabha and 577 for assembly seats. Two candidates, Mr. (Vilbach Singh Galeke) of the Congress-I and Captain Amrinder Singh of Akali Dal-Kabul, have been declared elected unopposed for the state assembly from (Tarantaran) constituency in Amritsar District and Samana constituency in Patiala District.

Today's elections gave an opportunity to the people of Punjab to restore a popular government in the troubled state which has been under president's rule for the last 57 months. The state government has made elaborate security arrangements to instill confidence amongst the electorate. The army helicopters are conducting aerial surveillance all over the 12,000 villages in the state.

Our Jullundur correspondent, who visited several polling booths in urban and rural areas, reports that voters turned up in large numbers to exercise their franchise well before polling began. Women voters outnumbered men at many of the polling booths. In four booths about 30 votes were polled in the first 40 minutes. Our correspondent adds polling is going on peacefully.

Our Amritsar correspondent reports that voting is going on peacefully in all the polling stations in the city.

30-40 Percent Voting Reported

BK1902075292 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0730 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] In Punjab, reports received from different districts till 1200 noon [0630 GMT] indicate that between 30 to 40 percent votes have been polled.

Our correspondents after visiting various polling booths in both rural and urban areas report that urban areas recorded more voting percentage than in the rural areas. In the urban areas of the border districts of Amritsar, Gurdarspur, and Ferozepore, polling is heavy whereas in the rural areas it is comparatively slow. Some of the polling stations in Amritsar city recorded over 45 percent votes by noon. Our Amritsar correspondent says the polling trends so far indicate that, by and large, people have ignored the boycott call. In Rupar District, women voters turnout in rural areas outnumbered their male counterpart. In Ludhiana, between 25 to 30 percent votes have already been cast while in Hoshiarpur District, it is between 30 and 35 percent.

Pakistan Said Instigating Boycott

BK1602100492 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0930 GMT 16 Feb 92

[Text] The union minister of state for home, Mr. M.M. Jacob, says that those boycotting the Punjab polls have fallen into the trap of Pakistan-trained militants. Talking to our Cochin correspondent today, Mr. Jacob said that there is enough proof that Pakistan has instigated Punjab militants to disrupt the election. He said militants are being trained in subversive activities in 30 training centers in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. Several prominent exservicemen have also called upon the voters to exercise their franchise fearlessly.

Islamabad Sponsoring Punjab 'Terrorists'

BK1602160492 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 16 Feb 92

[Text] The Akali Dal-Master Tara Singh Group, led by Jathedar Rachpal Singh, today protested outside the Pakistani High Commission in New Delhi against Islamabad's role in sponsoring terrorists in Punjab and Kashmir. In a memorandum to the mission, the protesters accused Islamabad of indulging in nefarious activities and also launching a disinformation campaign against India.

External Affairs Minister Solanki Visits Kuwait

Hails Pakistani Blockade of JKLF March

BK1502161692 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 15 Feb 92

[Text] The external affairs minister, Mr. Madhavsinh Solanki, has said Islamabad did the right thing in preventing the activists of the so-called JKLF [Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front] from crossing the Line of Control in Kashmir. He was talking to newsmen on his arrival in Kuwait today on a two-day official visit. This is the first visit to Kuwait by an Indian foreign minister since the liberation of the emirate last year. Mr. Solanki will have talks with his Kuwaiti counterpart later this evening. Mr. Solanki today met a large number of Indians in the emirate and discussed their problems.

Notes Kuwaiti Plans To Buy Arms

BK1802110892 Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information Service in English 0922 GMT 18 Feb 92

[INFORMATION SERVICE OF INDIA pickup of the New Delhi PIONEER Newspaper Report published on 18 February: "Kuwait Seeks Indian Arms"]

[Text] Kuwait has sought India's help in rebuilding its armed forces and informed Indian FM [foreign minister] Madhavsinh Solanki that it would like assistance in specific areas. According to Kuwait and Indian sources, Kuwait wants to diversify process of rebuilding its military forces. Kuwaiti Government is (?wary) of relying on west for its need, though it has a defence treaty with

United States. Kuwait officials have confirmed that first tangible outcome of Solanki's visit will be visit to India of a high-powered delegation from Kuwaiti Defence Ministry. It is significant that defence feelers to India have emanated from office of Amir. Amir is supreme commander of armed forces with Kuwaiti defence minister reporting directly to Amir and not to PM [prime minister]. Minister of defence is a member of ruling family.

Possibility of Kuwait becoming an important market for Arjun [tank], once its testing ends and production begins, is not ruled out. Another Kuwaiti request is in area of armoured cars and medium range artillery. Both items can be supplied by India and Indian officials are "favourably disposed" towards processing Kuwaiti request.

Kuwait is also looking for SAM [surface-to-air] missiles. India is likely to consider Kuwait request also, as Prithvi line of missiles is expected to become operational in near future. Another specific area in which assistance is being sought is manpower development.

Moroccan Told of Concern for Resolution on Kashmir

BK1802161092 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] India has told Morocco that the Pakistan-sponsored resolution on Kashmir passed by the conference of the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] is unfortunate. The matter came up during the talks between the minister for external affairs, Mr. Madhavsinh Solanki, and the visiting Moroccan foreign minister, Dr. Abdellatif Filali, in New Delhi today. Mr. Solanki said the responsibility for the present crisis in Kashmir squarely lies on the shoulders of the Pakistan leaders. Dr. Filali explained to Mr. Solanki that some resolutions got passed at the ICO conference. But his country desires that India and Pakistan should resolve their bilateral issues through dialogue.

Both the ministers also exchanged views on several bilateral and international matters, including the West Asia peace talks.

Iran

Baker Remarks on Algeria Declare 'War' on Islam

NC1902122692 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 9 Feb 92 pp 1, 18

[Editorial: "Nations Are Keeping Their Promise"]

[Text] What is happening in the world of Islam that so terrifies arrogance and its henchmen? Why are the rulers who claim to control the situation more terrified than anyone else? Why are the anti-popular regimes more scared than the people of their own roar?

A great tempest has overtaken Islam. Nations are trying to find their "Islamic identity" and are counting the minutes until they hoist its flag. They are anticipating the day when Islamic rule's glorious banner will fly over their countries. This is why they are not scared.

The situation is surprisingly like that which prevailed when the Islamic revolution was culminating in Iran. But the barrage of bullets, martial law, the change in pawns and governments, and the arrests of the heads and leaders trusted by the people cannot hinder the nations' struggles.

If governments believe in freedom and want to hold free elections, Islam would win in any Islamic country. But if governments promise freedom and elections and fool their nations, they will be disgraced sooner than anticipated. If governments want to resort to force, killings, and torture, the nations will not retreat and will not give up their struggle.

Why? What change has taken place that today even the false advocates of the leadership of Islam and of Muslims everywhere are feeling threatened and are worried that it is becoming impossible to keep fooling the nations?

Why, even in the land of revelation, are those who advocate serving Islam beseeching the people to give up their struggle against the deceivers?

Why are the weapons of martial law, coup d'etats, torture, and the massacre of Muslim nations backfiring, making nations bolder and more steadfast instead of intimidating them, terrifying Islam's enemies instead? The only explanation is that the Islamic revolution victory and the "propagation of the idea of mobilization" of the imam has led to the growth of the spirit of Islamic and religious tendencies in every corner of the world of Islam and that the nations have felt their responsibility for establishing Islamic rule.

What is happening in Algeria today is not unexpected. From the start it was clear that statesmen who trample on the people's votes and who resort to tanks, armored vehicles, imprisonment, and torture to terrify a nation do not have a great chance of victory.

The Algerian people's wrath is understandable. These reactions may enrage the West and even the coupist government, but this is apparently the natural outcome of this government's acts. The Algerian people are known to be a nation with history, culture, and freedom-seeking sentiments. A government ruling such a country should naturally know how to treat it so that its sentiments and feelings are not hurt.

By trampling on the people's votes, the Algerian Government and those who should be safeguarding the people's freedom have turned Algeria into a "powder keg". The coupist government's greatest mistake was to create the first spark and fire the first shot at this big keg. Anything that ensued was the wrath of a nation feeling it has been deceived and its views trampled on.

The point is that the wave of Islamic tendency is not limited to Algeria. Today the Islamic nations feel the need to revive the lost grandeur of Islam and the Muslims. This is a human feeling which the world should understand. The world should conform to Islam's new conditions and should know that there is little it can do to alter the situation to harm Islam and that whatever it does will only harm itself.

The United States, France, and their regional henchmen should be warned not to play with the heated sentiments of 1 billion Muslims throughout Islam and that if they are tempted into a show of power against the "world movement of Islam" they must bear the grave consequences because playing with nations' sentiments will have bitter consequences.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's remarks and warning of "a new era of Islamic power" in this country are extremely revealing. Islam should not take them lightly. This is a declaration of war against it, a blatant effort to interfere in the Islamic countries' internal affairs and one which should be answered with a strong slap in the face by the Islamic nations. How each nation solves its problems and deals with its enemies is something which concerns the nations and their cultures. And this is a terrifying thought for the United States and its henchmen.

Tehran Said Funding Algerian Fundamentalists

TA1702104792 (Clandestine) Iran's Flag of Freedom Radio in Persian 0645 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Text] According to reports by informed sources, the Islamic Republic regime has in recent days transferred large amounts of money, through the Foreign Ministry's secret account, to the Revolution Guards stationed in Sudan. This money is to be placed at the disposal of Algerian fundamentalists in order to prolong the riots in Algeria.

Further on Reaction to al-Musawi Assassination

Death To Strengthen Islamic Resolve

LD1802184992 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1110 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] For the second consecutive day, Lebanon has been expressing its revulsion and disgust over the Zionist regime's horrific crime in assassinating the combatant 'Allameh Sayyed 'Abbas Musawi, the leader of Lebanon's Hezbollah, with demonstrations of popular outrage accompanied by general strikes and mourning ceremonies.

Hundreds of thousands of people from throughout Lebanon gathered in the town of Ba'labakk, in eastern Lebanon early this morning in order to accompany the martyr's funeral procession to his birthplace in the town of al-Nabi Shit. Dozens of Lebanese and Palestinian official, political and religous personalities and several foreign delegations are also in Ba'labakk to take part in the ceremonies, the most prominent of which is the delegation sent on behalf of the leader of the Islamic revolution, headed by Ayatollah Jannati.

The extensive popular protest in various parts of Lebanon in response to the assassination of 'Allameh martyr Sayyed 'Abbas Musawi reveals that the people of Lebanon, with one voice, and regardless of religion or political affiliation, condemn the evil deed of the Zionist regime against an Islamic and national Lebanese personality, and insist that the path of the justice-seeking martyr must be continued.

Taking the various reactions and comments in response to the Zionist regime's recent action of martyring 'Allameh Sayyed Abbas Musawi as a whole, it would seem that the Zionist regime, in undertaking that dastardly assassination, was trying to inflict a blow on the Islamic Hezbollah organization in order to weaken the Islamic and anti-Zionist resistance, that is, the strong military arm of that party.

An examination of past events reveals that the Zionist regime has always been wrong in its calculations and the martyrdoms have, in proportion to importance, made the tree of Islamic resistance more fruitful. In just the same way that the martyrdoms of such martyrs as Ayatollah Beheshti, Raja'i, and Bahonar led to the death of eclectic movements in Islamic Iran and strengthened the foundations of the Islamic system, in Lebanon, too, the kidnapping of Musa Sadr, the martyring of Shaykh Raghib Harb, and the taking of Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd as a hostage have brought about the rapid expansion of Islamism in that country.

The transformation of the town of Jibshit, after the martyrdoms of Shaykh Raghib Harb and the kidnapping of Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd, into an active Islamic center in the south of that country is perhaps the best proof of that fact, and, undoubtedly, the blood of 'Allamah martyr Sayyid 'Abbas Musawi will extend the great Islamic movement throughout Lebanon.

Another fact which has been revealed by the recent actions of the Zionist regime has been the aggressive nature of the Zionist regime, which as a result of the current trend of compromise had become somewhat hidden and vague. In other words, Israel's participation in peace talks with several Arab countries is not a manifestation of peace-seeking trends in that regime in response to some compromising Arab governments—the daily suppression of the Muslim people of occupied Palestine and the continuation of the persistent acts of aggression against Lebanon further reveal the aggressive nature of that regime and present a different reality to the world.

The reason why the Zionist regime has not attacked other Arab countries is that Israel, with the active silence

of some Arab countries, has made the suppression of the people of Lebanon and Palestine a priority, because they continue to resist Israel's aggression. Since at the moment only those two fronts are open, the Zionist regime does not refrain from any crime in that direction and, undoubtedly, if it were not for the resistance of the Muslim people of Lebanon and Palestine to the Zionist regime's aggression, that regime would, in the light of the Security Council's silence over repeated violations of international regulations, directly extend the scope of its crimes and acts of aggression to other Islamic countries.

Majles Delegation Leaves for Funeral Service

LD1802180992 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] On behalf of Mr. Mehdi Karrubi, speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly and representative of the supreme jurisconsult [vali-ye faqih—the leader] in the Foundation of Martyrs, a delegation made up of a number of Majles deputies and officials from the Islamic Revolution's Foundation of Martyrs has left for Lebanon. The delegation is due to take part in the burial ceremony and memorial services for the martyred Hojjat ol-Eslam val Moslemin Sayyid 'Abbas al-Musawi in Lebanon.

Memorial Service Set for 20 Feb

LD1802113492 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] The Secretariat of His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, leader of the Islamic revolution, expressed greetings and condolences to His Holiness the Lord of the Age, to the great leader of the Islamic revolution, may his shadow continue, and to the revolutionary and combatant Muslims throught the world, in particular the revolutionary and vanguard Muslim Iranian nation on the unjust martyrdom of the resistant cleric and selfless leader of Lebanon's Hizballah, Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Sayyid 'Abbas al- Musawi, his wife, and small child.

Underscoring the fact that the unjustly spilled blood of this eminent martyr will deepen and intensify the justice-seeking struggles of the Lebanese and Palestinian people against the occuping Zionists, the secretariat announced that a memorial service will be held on behalf of the great leader, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, on Thursday 20 February, between 1500 and 1700 at the Shahid Mottahari school.

While asking for the Almighty's blessing for the lofty and sincere Sayyid we call on all the dear and compassionate people to pay tribute to this prominent character and the relentless struggles of this immortal martyr by attending this service.

Killing Opens 'New Era' of Struggle

LD1802174592 Tehran IRNA in English 1407 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 18, IRNA—The martyrdom of Hojjat ol- Eslam 'Abbas al-Musawi, secretary general of the Hizballah movement in Lebanon, has opened a new era in the struggles of the Lebanese people against the U.S. and the Zionist regime, Majles Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Mehdi Karrubi said today.

Speaking at the open session of the Majles, Karrubi termed the assassination of al-Musawi as "another treason against the Lebanese people which hurts the hearts of Muslims."

"No doubt that his blood will make anti-Zionist forces more determined in attaining their goals," the speaker pointed out.

Martyr al-Musawi, his wife, son and seven aides were martyred when his motorcade carrying him from a memorial service in Jibshit, south Lebanon, was missiled by intruding Israeli helicopter gunships Sunday.

The reaction of those Western countries claiming to be human rights advocates to such a crime is a test that will uncloak the "wicked face" of the West, he said. Karrubi also said that this crime will be registered in the black record of the U.S. now supplying the Zionist regime will all facilities.

"This martyrdom is in fact a great blow to the Lebanese Hezbollah but no doubt that as martyr al-Musawi strengthened the Islamic revolution during his life, his blood will guarantee the safety of the revolution," Karrubi concluded.

A letter bearing the signatures of the majority of Majles deputies was read at the end of the session, condoling the martyrdom of al-Musawi and reiterting that this crime would serve to escalate the struggle against the U.S. and Israel.

UK Author Rushdie Remains 'Number One Enemy'

British Muslims Issue Statement

LD1802002492 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1930 GMT 15 Feb 92

[Text] With an increase in the activities of the supporters of Salman Rushdie, the apostate author of *The Satanic Verses*, the head of the parliament of British Muslims, Kalim Siddiqi, has stressed that Rushdie continues to be Islam's number one enemy. In a press statement released on the eve of the third anniversary of the decree issued by the late Imam Khomeyni, peace be upon him, Kalim Siddiqi reminded that *The Satanic Verses* continues be be considered a dangerous thing and a conflict which has not reached its end. He said: The Parliament of the

British Muslims will explain the practical way of fighting against Rushdie and his supporters during its session in the month of May.

Rushdie Fatwah 'Unalterable'

LD1702190292 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Text] An informed source at the Foreign Ministry said the following about the meeting between members of the so-called Salman Rushdie support committee and an Iranian diplomat at the Iranian Embassy in London: What has been said is merely a propaganda hue and cry aimed at lessening the pressure and freeing Salman Rushdie from his predicament.

The official added: The members of that committee have so far gone to the Iranian Embassy a number of times and have asked for the abrogation of the decree on Salman Rushdie. This time, too, a similar request was made at a meeting between the said persons and a local employee of the Iranian Embassy in London. As in the previous instances, it was declared that the religious decree was unalterable.

He added: Issues such as the first meeting between an Iranian diplomat and the so-called Salman Rushdie support committee, the turnaround on the decree issued by His Holiness Imam Khomeyni, may he be admitted to God's paradise, or the interpretations of the said committee about Iran's surprise at the attention given by public opinion to this issue and [Iran's] concern about its repercussions are mere machinations of Zionist propaganda and are baseless.

Meeting With Rushdie Defender Denied

LD1802000792 Tehran IRNA in English 1829 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Text] London, Feb. 17, IRNA—The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran has categorically denied holding a meeting between its diplomats and Dr. Frances d'Souza, claiming to represent a certain committee for the defence of sentenced apostate Salman Rushdie.

In reference to a "distorted" report, an embassy press release received by IRNA today says that a local employee of the embassy met D'Souza in her capacity as director of Article 19 of a so-called International Centre Against Censorship, and clarified the ruling.

It was reiterated that the fatwa decreed by the father of the Islamic revolution, Imam Khomeyni, against the apostate Salman Rushdie is "a global Islamic matter" and is "absolutely irreversible". In addition Ms. D'Souza was told that Islam's defence mechanism operates from within the faith itself.

The meeting, held on February 13, was used the following day as a pretext by the Indian born British apostate in his wishfulness that such appeals to the Islamic Republic could result in the fatwa being lifted.

British Muslims supporting the Islamic revolution here expressed the view that the embassy was negligent in allowing speculation to arise by holding a meeting, given that such a meeting would inevitably be misinterpreted and misreported.

The fatwa against Rushdie carries death penalty for insulting the sanctities of Islam in his highly sacrilegious novel *The Satanic Verses*.

The apostate's ugly work has already spilled innocent Muslim blood in India and Pakistan, and according to divine law, the repentance of a sane, male apostate born of Muslim parents is not acceptable, and is a matter solely concerning afterlife, depending upon the sincerity of intention.

Meanwhile, in Tehran, a Foreign Ministry official today termed "mere propaganda stunt" the reports on the alleged meeting in London between D'Souza and an Iranian diplomat. "Such propaganda is intended to reduce pressure on Salman Rushdie and to save him from his terrible condition," said the official.

He said on several occasions the so-called committee for defence of the sentenced apostate had tried to contact the embassy but without success. "This time it managed to contact a local employee of the Iranian Embassy, but was told that the decree is irrevocable," the official said. All other reports in this connection are "sheer fabrications of the Zionist propaganda machinery," he stressed.

Rushdie went into hiding to escape justice, ever since the decree was pronounced against him by the late imam on February 13, 1989.

Tehran Said Seeking Renewed Ties With Israel

TA1702105092 (Clandestine) Iran's Flag of Freedom Radio in Persian 0645 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Text] As reported often by the world news media and Israeli Government officials, during the eight-year Iran-Iraq war the Israeli Government sold billions of dollars of weapons to the Islamic Republic, and secret relations were maintained between them during those years. Now, with a shift in the tone of the Israeli news media toward the Tehran regime, Hashemi-Rafsanjani's government has become extremely alarmed. According to sources inside the regime, its agents are trying to establish contact with Israeli officials in various parts of Europe and regain Israel's support on the basis of Hashemi-Rafsanjani's so-called pragmatic policy.

Commentary Sees Prospects for Relations With Cuba

LD1702053192 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1930 GMT 13 Feb 92

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Visiting Cuban Deputy Foreign Minister Mr. Hidalgo met and conferred with Vice President Mr. Habibi and Foreign Minister Mr. Velayati separately yesterday.

In his meeting with Dr. Habibi, the Cuban deputy foreign minister elaborated Cuba's economic problems and called for promotion of bilateral political and economic cooperation. In return Dr. Habibi expressed hope that Cuba overcome its problems and added that Iran had learnt from experience that if there is people's support, governments can solve all their problems.

Afterwards Dr. Habibi pointed to the favorable ties between Iran and Cuba and said the two countries can discuss bilateral economic exchanges at their joint economic commission, which is scheduled to be held in Tehran soon, and come to good results.

The Cuban deputy foreign minister also met with with Foreign Minister Velayati yesterday and stressed the need for expanding ties between the two countries in all fields.

Fact is Iran and Cuba have numerous possibilities for promoting their trade and economic relations. At present Cuba has a severe shortage of fuel, and Iran, whose main exports are oil and its derivatives, can meet that country's requirements. Prior to the developments in the former Soviet Union, Cuba used to procure its oil and fuel from that country at a cheap price. Now, in view of the fundamental changes in the former Soviet Union, and disruption in supplying Cuba with fuel, that country is facing serious problems in this regard. Announcement of such austerity measures for saving fuel such as use of bicycle instead of cars or using plow instead of tractor for farming very clearly show Cuba's dire need for fuel. Therefore, regulating Irano-Cuban relations can allow Cuban leaders to purchase oil from Iran instead of the former Soviet Union and fulfill its requirements.

In return Cuba can meet some commercial needs of Iran. Cuba is one the main exporters of sugar in the world—85 percent of its exports constitute sugar and its derivatives. Since Cuba has made investments in the sugar industry, it has great experiences in this field. For this reason Irano-Cuban commercial relations not only can meet the Iranian market's demand for sugar and its derivatives, but can also be of great help to Iran's sugar and sugar cane industry.

In addition to the existing grounds for expanding commercial relations between Iran and Cuba, the two countries can also cooperate in political and international issues. Under the present new international circumstances and with the change in bipolar system, the superpowers, especially the United States, are trying to form international developments and guide the current trend towards their desired order. So Third World countries, by working as the South-South cooperation, can prevent the shaping of the superpowers' order and find a place for themselves in the international order. To this end the cooperation of Iran and Cuba, as two countries having experienced the pressures and threats of domination-seeking powers such as America, can be instrumental in activating and organizing the measures of the South countries for preventing the materialization of the hegemonist powers' one-sided international order.

Solar Energy Advocated To Slow Oil Consumption

LD1702094992 Tehran IRNA in English 1501 GMT 15 Feb 92

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 15, IRNA—Cheap oil fuel has led to unsystematic consumption in Iran, and it is time oil products should be replaced by solar energy, said an industrial official here today.

Manager of the National Iranian Industries Organization Mohammad Askari warned at a seminar on solar energy, that Iran's oil reserves would last no more than 30 years, if, suppose 2.75 million barrels per day are exported in addition to the average daily consumption of 1.25 mn bpd.

He said the per capita oil consumption in Iran is as much as six times that of Bulgaria, three times that of the Netherlands and twice that of Pakistan.

Iran also has an estimated 300 trillion cubic feet of natural gas reserves, which, if used solely for domestic consumption, are sufficient for 200 years, said Askari.

He stressed on solar energy as a cheap and ready source of energy, which, as demonstrated in most parts of the world can be harnessed without any advanced technology or high expenditures.

Tax Exemption Ceiling for Public Sector Raised

LD1802114592 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 16 Feb 92

[Excerpt] At its open session today, the Majles approved the monthly tax exemption ceiling for public servants to be raised to 200,000 rials. You heard in the news bulletin that our correspondent has sent a report on this from the Majles.

[Unidentified correspondent] At today's open session of the Majles a review of the bill reforming the direct taxation law approved in March 1988, continued and 19 more articles of the bill were approved.

According to one of the approved articles, the tax exemption of employees whose salaries are paid by ministries, government establishments and companies, and municipalities or from government allocated funds will be increased to 2.4 million rials a year. The tax exemption ceiling for public servants is raised to 200,000 rial a month from the present 70,000 rials a month.

According to the article, the extent of tax exemption of the private sector salaries also has been set at 1.8 million.

The taxable income of university lecturers of all universities and higher education establishments involves 10 percent of tax and no other tax will be deducted from

such incomes. Moreover, the tax deducted from employees of ministries and government establishment, who are employed in rural areas, will be reduced by 50 percent.

According to another of the approved articles up to 1.5 million rials of yearly taxable incomes from employment, from one or several sources, will be exempt from taxation and the remaining income will be taxed according to statutory rates. Also, up to 125,000 of the monthly income through self-employment will be exempted from taxation. At the moment this figure stands at 25,000 rials for unmarried individuals and 50,000 for married couples.

Also, up to 125,000 rials of monthly income from real estate rentals will be exempted from monthly taxation of such incomes provided that the individual does not have any other source of income. [passage omitted]

Political Prisoners Said Executed 'Last Week'

TA1702105692 (Clandestine) Iran's Flag of Freedom Radio in Persian 0645 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Text] Informed sources in Tehran are saying that a number of political prisoners were executed at the beginning of last week on the order of Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i. The recent executions took place in Tehran, Mashhad, Karaj, Kermanshah, Esfahan, and Kerman.

Morphine, Heroin, Opium Seized; Traffickers Held

LD1602225392 Tehran IRNA in English 1523 GMT 16 Feb 92

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 16, IRNA—Some 3.5 tons of morphine destined for Europe has been seized from an international drug trafficking gang by Iran's anti-drug squads, a top police official revealed Sunday. "The huge haul of morphine was discovered from a container truck laden with pistachios that was heading towards Orumiyeh, capital of West Azerbaijan province," said Brigadier General Mohammad Za'eri, deputy commander of the Disciplinary Forces.

He also disclosed that Iranian customs officers at the Bazargan check point on Iran-Turkey border recently discovered 1,300 kgs of narcotics believed to be heroine, from a Turkish transit truck, and arrested two Turkish nationals.

Last month, he said, a truckload of 632 kgs of opium was seized near the southern Iranian port of Minab [Hormuzgan Province] on the strait of Hormuz.

Elsewhere around the country, added Za'eri, 32 drug trafficking bands were busted and over 7.7 tons of various kinds of narcotics seized.

The brigadier general put the number of smugglers nabbed in connection with the seized narcotics at 2,232.

Pakistan

Islamabad May Sue for Nondelivery of U.S. F-16's

BK1502132092 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 15 Feb 92 p 1

[By Shakil Shaikh]

[Text] Islambad, Feb 14—While the United States is backing out of its commitment to deliver six F-16s out of agreed 60 planes to Pakistan Air Force (PAF) in March this yar, the authorities in Pakistan are engaged in examining the possibility of seeking legal redress if the United States "defaults".

Some lawyers of international repute in the field of defence and corporate law have been approached by the Ministry of Defence Production, besides holding consulations with Pakistani legal experts to complete the preliminary work before February are out for suing both the U.S. Government and General Dynamics (GD) the manufacturers of F-16.

The delivery schedule, which is to start from March this year with handing over of six planes, is unlikely to be observed by the U.S. under its Foreign Military Support (FMS) programme.

U.S. Presidents, George Bush, has already announced "no flexibility" in the attitude of his government.

The State Department has asked Pakistan to freeze its nuclear programme enabling President Bush to issue a certificate that Pakistan's nuclear programme is not weapons oriented.

"Despite a possible nonfulfilment of delivery schedule by U.S., Pakistan will pay $5 million next month, revealed a cabinet source. [quotation mark as published]

Pakistan has so far paid $320 million in instalments and seems ready to continue paying further till 1996, when the full contract of delivering 670 F-16s is supposed to complete.

The 4.1 billion dollar agreement for the purchase of F-16s was signed in 1989, when Ms Benazir Bhutto was the Prime Minister. According, Pakistan deposited about $70 million till the time when U.S. military and economic aid was stopped in October, 1990 under the Pressler Amendment.

Defence experts say that the non-delivery of F-16s in the coming March would be another setback to Pakistan. Earlier, Pakistan Navy had suffered due to non-supply of aircraft in November 1991.

Sources in the Foreign Office said that Secretary, Foreign Affairs Shahrayar Khan, was also sent to Washington for securing assurance from the State Department about the delivery of F-16s besides other important matters.

Pakistan, a Foreign Office source said, has a strong desire to establish close ties with the U.S. but the relations between the two countries have strained due to the stoppage of U.S. aid.

Afghanistan Settlement Without Najibollah Favored

NC1702181592 Paris AFP in English 1643 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Excerpt] Tehran, Feb 17 (AFP) - Pakistani Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif said Monday his country and Iran agreed there should be a "political settlement" in Afghanistan excluding Afghan President Najibollah.

Sharif told AFP that Afghanistan was one of the issues he and Iranian President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani had discussed on the sidelines of an Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) summit.

He described the ECO summit as "very constructive," noting the "arrival of ex-Soviet republics and emergence of enlarged regional cooperation." [passage omitted]

Nawaz Sharif Urges ECO Solidarity

LD1702184192 Tehran IRNA in English 1654 GMT 17 Feb 92

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 17, IRNA—Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in his vote of thanks at the end of the first summit meet of the Economic Cooperation Organization today, called on ECO to play an active role for bringing about a balanced economic order.

In his brief remarks, prior to the release of the communique, Sharif said "along with political developments in international relations, we are also witnessing extensive changes in the international economic order. Therefore, due attention must be paid to the constructive and active role that can be played by our organization in bringing about a balanced economic order and in bridging the gap between the North and the South."

He welcomed the expansion of the ECO to include five of the Muslim republics of the former Soviet Union, and said "we now have the great opportunity to further enrich these relations with the participation of other fraternal states from Central Asia.

"We welcome and applaud the commitment shown by our brothers from Central Asia to actively participate in our endeavours towards achieving our goals."

Founded as the Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD) by Iran, Turkey and Pakistan in 1964, the group was renamed the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in 1985, and the recent summit saw the admission of the Republics of Azerbaijan, Turkmenia, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan as new members.

Kazakhstan, another newly independent Muslim republic in Central Asia, attended the summit as an observor.

"We are living in very critical and exciting times. It calls for vigilance and solidarity to defend our collective interests. It demands courage and pragmatism to strive for peace and progress so that we can achieve self-reliance and contribute to a just and fair international order," said the Pakistani premier.

He said ECO member countries are blessed with "enormous resources" and their "proper harnessing and utilisation can make an immense contribution to the prosperity of our peoples."

The 8-member ECO is the largest single organisation of Muslim regional states, and presently covers over 250 million people.

Nuclear Working Agreement With India Advocated

BK1702035892 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 16 Feb 92 p 7

[Editorial: "The Need for a Nuclear Doctrine"]

[Text] New Delhi's refusal to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and retention of its nuclear option is unfortunate but not unexpected. The nuclear issue is one in a series of irritants between Pakistan and India, and New Delhi is feeling particularly vulnerable at this stage, given that pressure is growing on India to resolve the Kashmir question. India has also rejected the five-nation summit, proposed by Pakistan, to discuss a nuclear-free South Asia. The proposed summit envisioned some form of an accord between Pakistan and India on non-proliferation under the aegis of China, the United States and presumably Russia, in place of the former Soviet Union, since the proposal predates the disintegration of the USSR. Pakistan can, at this time, sit around and moan over India's refusal to sign the NPT, complain about New Delhi's attitude in world forums and insist that American aid be discontinued to India under the terms of the Pressler Amendment. Or Islamabad can take a practical approach and work towards limiting the threat of nuclear proliferation in South Asia by acknowledging the extent of its own nuclear programme and then working towards creating a balance in the nuclear equation.

There is an imperative need for India and Pakistan to develop a nuclear doctrine. Until now, both countries have asserted that they have only peaceful nuclear programmes. In this context, the two countries have been unable to develop any kind of rationale or doctrine that could govern the development of individual nuclear programmes. There has been a nebulous form of mutual assured destruction operative over the past twenty years, but if New Delhi is certain that it does not want to discuss a nuclear-free zone, then both countries must announce their programmes and draw up some kind of working doctrine determining nuclear policy.

Once we get past the hurdle of pointing accusing fingers at each other, then we can work towards some kind of arms treaty that would contain numbers of warheads and

delivery systems. With both countries denying their nuclear weapons capability in public, and working on it in private, there is absolutely no mechanism determining the numbers involved or who is in actual control of any weapons that may exist or can be hurriedly assembled. If India refuses to become a signatory of the NPT, then Pakistan is justified in following suit. But the prevalent situation is infinitely more dangerous than if both states were openly declared nuclear powers. The arms race is continuing in South Asia but it is kept under wraps. By declaring themselves nuclear powers, the two nations can then claim to having a balance of power as well as deterrence. Then we can move towards limiting the number of warheads and nuclear weapons each country has and also seek verification of those figures. The ideal solution would be a verifiable nuclear-free South Asia. If that is not possible, then we need a nuclear doctrine urgently.

Commercial Flights to Uzbekistan To Begin in March

BK1602144892 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 16 Feb 92

[Text] The first-ever bilateral air services agreement between Pakistan and Uzbekistan, a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States, was signed in Karachi today. The agreement was signed by the director general of Civil Aviation Authority and the director general of Civil Aviation Department of Uzbekistan. Under the agreement, the Uzbekistan Airways will have a weekly flight from Tashkent to Karachi and back, whereas PIA [Pakistan International Airlines] will have a once-a-week Islamabad-Tashkent-Islamabad service. The flights between the two countries are expected to begin sometime in March this year.

JKLF To Attempt New March To Kashmir Border

BK1502152292 Hong Kong AFP in English 1508 GMT 15 Feb 92

[Text] Islamabad, Feb 15 (AFP)—The Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front [JKLF] decided Saturday to attempt another march into Indian-held Kashmir on March 23, its chief Amanullah Khan announced after a meeting by a special JKLF committee.

"We have consulted our friends and they have decided to cross the border en masse on March 23, 1992," exactly two years after the death of the JKLF's commander-in-chief Ashfaq Majid Wani, who was killed by the Indian troops in Srinagar, he said.

The decision was taken by a special commitee of the pro-independence JKLF in Muzaffarabad, capital of the Pakistan- administered Azad Kashmir, two days after Khan abandoned a previous march, fearing thousands of casualties at the hands of the Pakistani army.

Clashes Wednesday between security forces and Khan's supporter marching towards the border left 16 people dead and about 200 injured by unofficial count, while officials put the death toll at only six.

"We averted a massacre by withdrawing Thursday as the Pakistan Government intervened at the last moment," Khan told AFP by telephone from the state capital Muzaffarabad.

"This time we will not call it off," even if blocked by the Pakistani Army, he said.

"The world should know how serious we are. India and Pakistan should also know our seriousness," Khan said, stressing that the original march had been suspended, "not abandoned totally."

"Whatever the decision of the government of Pakistan, whatever the Indians do, we will have a go," the militant pro-independence leader said.

When asked about the possibility of further casualties, he said "it may be a bloodbath, but we are ready."

The marchers will be better prepared to avert seizure of their vehicles and blockades of roads by police and paramilitary forces, he said, but stressed "we will be unarmed again."

The JKLF leader said the United Nations "should do something to give us our right," warning that the international body would be equally responsible if India or Pakistan launched attacks on the marchers.

A 1948 U.N. resolution calling for Kashmiris to chose between India and Pakistan through a plebiscite in the predominantly Moslem state awaits its implementation.

The JKLF marchers aim to express solidarity with militants waging a bloody secessionist movement in the Indian-held Kashmir, the country's only Moslem majority state.

Kashmir was divided after the first Indo-Pakistan war in 1948. The two countries fought a second war over the state in 1965, but the issue remains unresolved.

Khan said many thousands of people had died in Indian-held Kashmir in the past two years, so "another 10,000 can sacrifice their lives here."

He said earlier Saturday the "massive participation ignoring warnings" to support for his call to defy the ban on crossing into India "was a referendum against the state government." The Kashmiris had given their verdict that its policy was wrong, he said.

"It was overwhelmingly endorsed by the masses," he said at a rally in Muzaffarabad to pay hommage to those killed at the ceasefire line.

The JKLF sources said some 5,000 people Saturday attended the rally.

Khan said his call to Kashmiris to observe a general strike Saturday to protest the security forces action

earlier this week met with "complete success," with shops closed and traffic off the roads.

But a government statement in Muzaffarabad said the strike call had failed.

"Business was normal and traffic was as usual in major cities," it said, adding, "by not supporting the call, the people have shown they want peace and tranquility in the state."

Minister Clarifies Kashmir March Casualty Figures

BK1802144592 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 18 Feb 92

[Text] The federal minister for Kashmir affairs, Mr. Mehtab Ahmad Khan, told the National Assembly today that seven people were killed and 42 injured during the march in an attempt to cross the Line of Control in Azad Kashmir last week. Opposing a previlege motion sought to be moved by a number of PDA [Pakistan Democratic Alliance] members on his statement on the floor of the house on the 13th of this month, the minister assured that he could not think of misinforming or misleading the house. He said he made the statement on the basis of information given by the AJK [Azad Jammu and Kashmir] government.

The previged motion was tabled by Syed Iftiqar Hussain Gilani, Maqdoom Shahabuddin, Chaudhary Altaf Hussain, Mr. Afsal Khan, Mr. Aftab Shaban Mirani, Babu Ghulam Hussain, Syed Nabi Qamar, Mr. Rafiq Ahmad Nahesar, and Mr. Ahmad Hassan. They were of the view that the minister had misinformed the house by stating that no incident of firing took place on the 11th of this month. The speaker, Gauhar Ayub Khan, after listening to arguments from both sides of the house rejected the motion.

The house will now meet tomorrow morning.

Serious Illness May Force Sindh Leader's Ouster

BK1802034692 Hong Kong AFP in English 0221 GMT 18 Feb 92

[By Masud Shah]

[Text] Karachi, Feb 18 (AFP)—A serious illness may force the resignation of the powerful chief minister of Pakistan's troubled Sindh province, Jam Sadiq Ali, press reports and officials here say.

Although the exact nature of his ailment is unknown, speculation that Ali was about to step down has been rampant since he suddenly fell ill at his daughter's wedding last Wednesday.

Ali, 65, had been admitted to a London hospital for urgent medical treatment earlier this month.

Despite officials' refusal to comment on his illness, newspapers here quoted doctors as saying Ali was suffering from cirrhosis of the liver.

Ali has never acknowledged that his health problems might force him to leave office, but political sources said his condition had deteriorated. Doctors have advised a "prolonged rest," one source said.

If Ali were unable to continue in his post, an acting chief minister would be appointed until a new chief minister could be elected, federal minister Mir Hazar Khan Bijarani told reporters Sunday.

Yet observers here said it would be difficult to find a replacement of Ali's stature in the ethnically divided, politically volatile Sindh, which has the highest crime rate of any of Pakistan's four provinces.

Much of it is politically related.

Ali had managed to bring down the number of crimes by using security forces against bandits, murderers and kidnappers, as well as by winning the support of tribal leaders, who are traditionally influential in the region.

But last month he felt compelled to order a security crackdown resulting in widespread arrests of nationalists in Sindh after a separatist leader called for Sindh's independence from Pakistan.

Ali is also controversial for arresting a number of activists of former prime minister Benazir Bhutto's Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP). She has accused the chief minister, a former PPP dissident, of launching a political "vendetta" against her supporters.

A principal ally of Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Ali heads a coalition government comprising members of the ethnic Muhajir Qaumi Movement, some Sindhi nationalists, and his own group of independent deputies.

Before leaving for Tehran on Saturday, Sharif ruled out an immediate change in Sindh, saying the chief minister would remain at his post as long as his health permitted.

But on the chance that may not be long, Sharif left behind his political advisor, Chaudhary Nisar Ali, to monitor the situation in the important province—Pakistan's second most populous—and keep him posted during the Tehran summit of the Economic Cooperation Organisation.

The adviser has since kept busy consulting deputies from Sindh, and held talks with Pakistan President Ghulam Ishaq Khan on Sunday.

Bijarani, a federal minister from Sindh, was quoted by newspapers as saying that Sharif would make a decision on Ali's tenure after his return from the Iranian capital.

Bijarani, 45, who headed the PPP in Sindh before quitting the party in 1985 over political differences in the leadership, has himself been touted in press reports as a likely successor.

He later joined the federal cabinet as minister for railways, and currently holds the portfolio of defence production.

Another minister, Ilahi Bakhsh Soomro, has been mentioned but has denied his candidacy.

The southern province is also the home base of Bhutto, who has demanded Ali's dismissal for what she has alleged was high-handed treatment of her supporters.

Sri Lanka

Security Forces Pursue, Kill LTTE Militants

'Terrorist' Bases Seized

BK1502114292 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 1021 GMT 15 Feb 92

["OANA/pool" Item]

[Text] Colombo, 5 Feb (LANKAPUVATH)—The security forces seized five LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] terrorist bases and made a large haul of logistics in Batticaloa and Trincomalee districts Friday [14 February].

The joint operations command told LANKAPUVATH that government troops, Friday engaged in jungle operations in the general area east of Karadiyanaru in the eastern Batticaloa District cleared four hastily abandoned terrorist bases, one at Unnichchi, and three at Karukkapulcheenai, and seized large stocks of medical supplies, dry rations, fresh rations, stationery, ready made garments, seven motorcycles and a large stock of Arul grenades and anti personnel mines.

Government troops engaged in jungle operations Friday cleared a hastily abandoned terrorist camp at Vallaitoddam in the eastern district of Trincomalee and seized a stock of Claymore mines and a stock of dry ration.

Government troops, Friday shot dead three terrorists and seized their fire arms and ammunition at a point south of Upparu in the eastern Trincomalee District.

Meanwhile, the curfew enforced in Jaffna with effect from 0600 hours (local time) Saturday will continue till 0600 hours (local time) Tuesday.

Police Hunt LTTE 'Hit Squad'

BK1602092892 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0833 GMT 16 Feb 92

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 16 Feb (LANKAPUVATH)— The police have launched a massive manhunt in Colombo and its suburbs for the members of a LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] hit squad detailed to bomb major targets in Colombo including several very important persons. Official sources told LANKAPUVATH the plan, master minded by LTTE intelligence chief Pottuamman who allegedly planned the Ranjan Wijeratne and Rajiv Gandhi murders, was uncovered after soldiers arrested a member of the hit squad at the army barrier at Thandikulam in the northern Vavuniya district. Pottuamman, along with LTTE leader Prabhakaran are being charged in Madras for the Indian prime minister's murder and warrants are out for their arrest.

The suspect under interrogation had said he was on his way to Colombo from Pottuamman's base in Nallur, to set up a safehouse for the LTTE hit squad detailed to murder severl VIP's and bomb major targets in Colombo and to link up with the other murders of the squad. According to intelligence reports the LTTE hit squad cadres from Batticaloa have already arrived in Colombo. The suspect had told the authorities that he had also been told to reconoitre targets to be attacked.

A communique issued by the Defence Ministry in Colombo stated: "In the light of the recent incidents and the present law and order situation, the government has taken a decision to ascertain the identity of persons other than the permanent residents, present in the Western Province. Any person taking temporary refuge in the areas mentioned in places other than the established refugee camps are hereby required to furnish full information about their indentity to the nearest police station within 14 days from the date of publication of this notice. They are hereby warned that failure to do so will entail severe penalties. Owners of house or lodging places who have leased or let out to, or permitted their premises to be used by outsiders are hereby directed to furnish full details relating to the names, period of occupation, etc., of such outsiders, to the nearest police station within 14 days from the date hereof. Failure to do so or the supply of false information will be dealt with severely under the law".

Troops Surround 40-50 Militants

BK1602095892 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0857 GMT 16 Feb 92

["OANA/pool" Item]

[Text] Colombo, 16 Feb (LANKAPUVATH)—Government troops battling the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] in the jungles of Thoppigala, south of the border of the Batticaloa and Polonnaruwa districts, were reported Sunday [16 February] to have formed a cordon round a large group of 40-50 terrorists.

Official sources told LANKAPUVATH that the security forces were engaged in a clearing operation in the 20 square mile Thoppigala jungle, favourite hideout of the terrorists as its mountainous ridges, valleys and jungle canopies are ideally suited for a terrorist hideout.

The LTTE area leader of Thoppigala, Latheef, was killed along with five sub group leaders Friday by the security forces. Meanwhile, troops on Saturday located and

destroyed two more LTTE bases, north east of Narakamulla in the Batticaloa District and shot dead three terrorists.

The bases comprised 10 huts and a rice mill.

The terrorists had hurriedly abandoned the bases in the wake of the approaching troops, leaving behind stocks of dry rations and medical supplies.

Forces Kill 6 Militants, Destroy 15 Bases

BK1702090692 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0811 GMT 17 Feb 92

["OANA/pool" Item]

[Text] Colombo 17 Feb (LANKAPUVATH)—Government troops killed six terrorists and wounded 20, as they destroyed 15 LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] bases and made a large haul of weapons and other logistics in operation "Eastern Cut Off" in the Thoppigala jungles of the eastern Batticaloa District during the weekend, bringing the total number of terrorists killed in the eastern province this month to 60.

An LTTE radio transmission said six wounded terrorists were in a critical condition.

Official sources told LANKAPUVATH that troops had captured an LTTE medical base, including a 60-bed hospital, after a firefight Sunday [16 February] night at Thoppigala.

Among the items seized by the security forces in the raids on the 15 bases were AK-47 rifles, large stocks of Johnny mines, grenades and other explosives, food, medical supplies, women's clothes, dress material, radio transmitters, motor cycles, bicycles, petrol, kerosene and diesel.

The 30 square mile Thoppigala jungle is located close to the border of the Batticaloa and Polonnaruwa districts about 30 kilometres south east of Welikande, is the LTTE centre of operations in the Batticaloa District.

This dense jungle is marked by high ridges with a visibility of 25 kilometres up to the sea on the east coast, valleys and thick jungle canopies—an ideal hideout where the LTTE Batticaloa leader Karuna, has his mobile headquarters known as Beirut Base.

The jungle has been named Thoppigala by the Sinhala villagers of Aralanwila and Maduru Oya as the peak of the highest hill at Thoppigala resembles a "thoppiya" (hat).

Meanwhile, the curfew in the Jaffna District ends at 0600 hours (local time) Tuesday.

Women Cadres Among 10 'Terrorists' Killed

BK1802094092 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0826 GMT 18 Feb 92

["OANA/Pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 18 Feb (LANKAPUVATH)—Ten terrorists were killed by the security forces in northern Sri Lanka Monday.

The Joint Operations Command told LANKAPUVATH, Sri Lanka Air Force planes attacked and destroyed a women's terrorist camp at Irampaikulam in the Vavuniya District, killing four LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] women cadres and wounding 10.

Six LTTE cadres were killed at Iddaikadu in the Jaffna District when a security forces clearing patrol moving from a forward position confronted a group of terrorists and engaged them with small arms.

40 Tamil Tigers Said Killed in 2 Days

BK1902113292 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 19 Feb 92

[Text] An estimated 40 LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] terrorists were killed or wounded in past two days. Official sources told LANKAPUVATH that 30 were killed or wounded in the battle of Kokkutuduwan in the Mullaitivu District yesterday. Ten others, including four women's bridgade terrorists, were killed on Monday. The heavy LTTE casualties were reported as ground troops backed by air support attacked a group of terrorists who made an abortive attempt to ambush a fighting patrol at Kokkutuduwan in the northern Mullaitivu District. One soldier was also killed in the two-hour fire fight which developed into a battle. Heavy artillery and fighter bombers pounded and destroyed enemy positions, killing and wounding a large number of terrorists and forcing others to withdraw.

Meanwhile, several terrorist suspects have been taken in for questioning by the police as teams of plain clothes detectives combed Colombo and its suburbs for members of an LTTE hit squard. Official sources told LANKAPUVATH that detailed checks are being made of lodging houses and other likely places where members of the squad may be holed out. [as heard]

LTTE-Israeli Arms Purchasing Deal Disclosed

BK1802074292 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0715 GMT 18 Feb 92

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 18 February (LANKAPUVATH)—The Criminal Investigation Department [CID] in Colombo Tuesday [18 February] cabled Interpol headquarters in Lyon, France, and the Australian Interpol branch in Canberra for details of the multi-million dollar airline

ticketing fraud perpetrated by a ring of Tamil businessmen in Sydney to fund LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] arms purchases from Israel, police sources told LANKAPUVATH.

They said the CID had already begun preliminary investigations and a team of detectives was likely to be sent to Australia, once the full details of the latest LTTE arms smuggling racket were received. According to reports reaching Colombo, the kingpin in the airline ticket-cum-smuggling racket is the brother-in-law of the owner of a shopping plaza in Colombo.

Hard evidence of Israel supplying arms to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam was revealed when Australian Federal Police cracked a massive airline ticketing fraud running into millions of Australian dollars by Sri Lankan Tamil businessmen in Sydney. Some of them had visited Israel thrice during the last year to arrange shipments of arms to the LTTE.

The TELEGRAPH MIRROR of Sydney reported that the four-step operation was: 1. Sri Lankan Tamil businessmen arrive in Australia from the United Kindgom via Germany. 2. Funds from the travel fraud sent to Swiss and German bank accounts. 3. Secret meetings in Israel with arms dealers for purchase of weapons, and 4. guns sent to Tamil guerrillas in Sri Lanka.

In this "Australia's biggest-ever travel fraud" as described by the newspaper, two Sri Lankan Tamil businessmen had established two travel agencies in Sydney. After obtaining IATA licence, they had defrauded six major airlines including the KLM of the Netherlands to the tune of millions of dollars. They had also printed 800,000 fake national Australia Bank and American Express travellers' cheques.